



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Protest against Privatisation of PSUs

(Report 15)



Raj Bhavan March in Thiruvanthapuram, Kerala, 13 September



Candle Light Rally at Palaghat, Kerala, 7 October

Protest against Privatisation of PSUs



Against Modi government's attempt to float global tender, the ongoing struggle against strategic sale of Salem Steel Plant got intensified with 300 workers, led by Save Salem Steel Joint Committee, resorted to *Rasta Roko* and courting arrest in front of Salem head post office on 23 October.

Joint Trade Union Conventions in States

(Report Page 10)



Chhattisgarh



Odisha

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

Inside**Page**

Working Class & Great October Revolution - K Hemalata	5
Trade Unions' Joint Conventions	10
Industries & Sectors	13
Agitation against Privatisation of PSUs in Kerala	15
States	18
Workers - Peasants Unity	23
International	24
Consumer Price Index	26

Defend Democracy

The workers' and people's democratic rights are under serious attack. Defending democratic rights to know, to express, to oppose, to demonstrate are pre-conditions for advancing trade union movement. These are under challenge.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has imposed a blanket ban on any protest programme at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. Earlier, when protest programme at Boat Club was banned in 1993, the trade unions launched historic militant struggle in Delhi. Thousands of workers, coming from all over India, faced police barricade, lathi charge and teargas. Since then this alternative place was allotted at Jantar Mantar for staging protest before the Parliament in New Delhi.

High Courts in several states have also been putting severe restriction on place and manner of demonstrative protests in state capitals.

There are serious attacks on the 'right to know' to cover up corruption at high places under political patronage involving the corporates. BJP president Amit Shah's son Jay Shah filed defamation case against the internet media *The Wire* for publishing the news item as "*The Golden Touch of Amit Shah*" exposing 'Turnover of a company owned by Shah's son increased 16,000 times over in the year following election of PM Narendra Modi.' A local court in Gujarat has put ban on *The Wire* from further publishing the exposure on the business of Jay Shah. Resolution of a seminar of journalists in Delhi questioned this attempt to gag the voice of the press.

Basundhara Raje government in Rajasthan has issued an ordinance on 7 September putting ban on filing FIRs on corruption charges against 'public servants' and judges without government's approval and bars the media from reporting under threat of even 'imprisonment'. Despite Editors Guild of India charging that the ordinance "drastically curbs the freedom of the press guaranteed by the Constitution of India" and urging "to immediately withdraw the ordinance and desist from making it into a law", the BJP government has gone ahead in placing

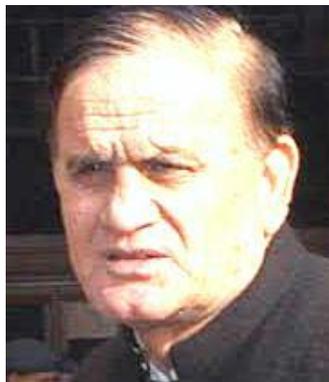
the Bill in the Assembly.

Killing of journalists Gauri Lankesh in Bengaluru and Santanu Bhowmik in Tripura against which CITU joined in countrywide protest are also ominous of attacks on freedom of expression reminding us the black days of Emergency.

Working class has to face these new challenges boldly. CITU has to take the lead and unite the trade union movement in defending the workers and people's democratic rights.

Condolence

Comrade D. L. Sachdeva



General Secretary Tapan Sen and other Central Secretariat members of CITU at AITUC office laying wreath to the departed leader

Comrade D. L. Sachdeva, the national secretary of AITUC and a veteran leader of united trade union movement in the country, passed away after brief ailment and hospitalisation in New Delhi on 26 August 2017 at the age of 73. Comrade Sachdeva was respected for his dedication and expertise in drafting demands, declarations and documents on behalf of the joint platform of all central trade unions. He was also active at the grass root trade union activities in several industries in and around Delhi.

General secretary Tapan Sen and other central secretariat members of CITU visited AITUC central office in New Delhi on that day and laid wreath to the body of the departed leader and expressed condolence to the family members of Comrade Sachdeva and to the leaders and members of AITUC. National leaders of other central trade unions including INTUC, BMS, AICCTU and AIUTUC also personally came in AITUC office to pay respectful homage to the departed leader and convey their condolences.

AITUC held a condolence meeting in memory of Comrade Sachdeva at their central office on 12 September. CITU president Hemalata and other central secretariat members attended the condolence meeting and general secretary Tapan Sen addressed the meeting paying homage to the departed leader. Leaders of other central trade unions, director of ILO and several local trade unions and family members of Comrade Sachdeva also attended the condolence meeting.

Government Imposes More Burden on Farmers

CITU general secretary Tapan Sen, MP wrote urgent letter to the union minister of road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari on 18 October objecting against the gazette notification for proposed amendment in the Motor Vehicles Rules removing the words "Agricultural tractor is a Non Transport vehicle." This will bring 'agricultural tractors' under the category of 'commercial transport vehicle' and will attract all fees, levies and taxes as applicable and from which the agricultural tractors are being exempted now. Agri-tractors are implements of cultivation and in no way can be categorized as commercial transport vehicles.

It will be against the long-standing policy of successive governments not to tax the agriculture sector. If amended, it would impose additional burden on the farmer by at least Rs.30,000 per annum per tractor being used for cultivation. As the proposed amendment would impose heavy burden on the already ailing agricultural sector, Tapan Sen demanded its withdrawal.

Working Class and Great October Revolution

K. Hemalata

The centenary of the Great October Revolution is being celebrated by the working class all over the world during the last one year. The 15th conference of CITU decided to observe the centenary of the Great October Revolution by focussing on the ideological development of its cadres. Many classes, conventions, meetings, seminars etc have been conducted all over the country by the state committees and affiliated unions of CITU as per this decision. In addition many other organisations of different sectors of the working class – of insurance, bank, telecom, state and central government departments, etc – have organised various programmes to commemorate the occasion. The Left parties too observed the centenary all over the country.

The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) representing 92 million workers in 126 countries in all the continents has observed the centenary through various programmes across the world. The WFTU leadership will be participating in the concluding event being organised by the Communist Party of Russian Federation in Moscow.

The Great October Revolution was an event that took place in Russia a hundred years ago. It led to the establishment of socialism in an industrially backward country like Russia. What is its significance that despite the reverses and setbacks to socialism in Russia as well as in the east European countries, the working class across the world continues to be inspired by it?

The October Revolution was an event that literally 'shook the world', as the American socialist and journalist John Reed wrote in his eye witness account, 'Ten Days that Shook the World'. It sounded the death knell of imperialism. The workers, peasants and other sections of toiling people tore apart the old exploitative structure of capitalism and erected the framework for a new exploitation free society, a socialist society. It showed the future path for the development of humanity. It was a shining example of 'concrete analysis of concrete conditions' and masterly application of Marxist principles to change society, by the Bolshevik party, the party of the working class.

What the Revolution has achieved was unprecedented and unimaginable at that time. It was a wonder. Even the so called 'welfare states' in Europe after the Second World War could not equal the rights and benefits achieved by the working class – land distribution, workers' control over factories, the right to recall elected representatives, free education and health for all, free nurseries, communal kitchens and laundries to liberate women from the back breaking domestic work. The comment of the Czech communist Fuchs 'All our tomorrows had become today' aptly describes the dramatic changes achieved by the revolutionaries.

The impact of the October Revolution on the national liberation movements across the world, the role of Soviet Union in defeating Nazi Germany in the Second World War, the immense sacrifices made the Soviet people in saving the world from the clutches of Hitler's fascism are well known. Socialist Russia extended unconditional help and support in developing the technological and industrial base in our country through the establishment of various public sector units, the establishment of premier institutions for engineering education and in the development of a self reliant economy after our independence.

What lessons can the working class of India learn from the experiences of the working class of Russia, which led a successful revolution that changed the world?

The conditions of the working class and their trade unions in Russia before the Revolution were not better than that of the working class in our country today. They were far worse. Though the labour movement in Russia began with the development of capitalism in the country and the first strike was held sometime between 1870 and 1880, it was not until 1905 that unions were organised. Trade unions soon expanded their influence. But repression on the unions and police persecution increased since 1907. The union committee members faced constant threat of arrest by the police. The police confiscated their funds and registers. The leaders including the presidents and secretaries of the unions were deported to Siberia. Czarism made it impossible for the unions to conduct their day to day activities and organise struggles on even the economic demands of the workers. Matters became worse with the declaration of war in 1914. War was used to further suppress the trade unions. The extent of repression can be understood from the fact that while around

200,000 workers were organised in trade unions in 1905, on the eve of the Revolution in 1917 there were only three unions with a total membership of 1500.

But despite this rudimentary state of the trade unions, the working class and other sections of toiling masses carried on their economic struggles with great tenacity. The working class gained its class consciousness through such struggles under conditions of severe czarist repression.

The war devastated the country. Conditions of the workers worsened. Food became scarce. Soldiers were forced to fight in the freezing cold without proper clothes or equipment. Discontent was growing among all these sections.

It was in such conditions that the women workers of Petrograd observed International Women's Day, for the first time on a working day on 23rd February 1917 (8th March as per the new calendar), by striking work. The women workers of the textile factory came out and marched on the streets calling out the workers of different factories on the way to join them. Hundreds of thousands of workers, men and women, joined the procession demanding bread and end to war. They demanded an end to monarchy. The military arrested hundreds of their leaders. Over hundred people were killed on the day. Unhappy with the terror let loose on the people large section of the army joined the revolutionaries. This February Revolution forced Czar Nicholas II to abdicate.

The overthrow of Czarism unleashed the creative and organising initiatives of the working masses. The workers organised into the Soviets of Workers' Deputies. These were councils of workers. In fact the first Soviet was established in Ivanovna - Voznesensk during a strike of textile workers in 1905, as a strike committee. Later it developed into an elected body of the town's workers. This was followed by the establishment of Soviets of Workers' Deputies in around 50 towns but these were crushed soon. The leaders were arrested and imprisoned. Soviets of Workers' Deputies and Soviets of Soldiers Deputies, who were from the peasant families and represented the peasants were formed and became active after the February Revolution. 1090 delegates representing more than 400 different Soviets participated in the first congress of the Soviets held in June 1917. By the time of the October Revolution there were over 900 Soviets. Majority of these including those in Petrograd and Moscow were controlled by the Bolsheviks. The Soviets of Workers' Deputies were instruments of political struggle for the working class of Russia.

The Bolsheviks did not have majority among the Soviets from the beginning. They were in a minority till July 1917. But the tactics adopted by them under the leadership of Lenin helped them capture majority of the Soviets by October.

Lenin emphasised the need to win over majority of the Soviets by clearing the illusions that they had on the provincial government, by exposing the government through patient, systematic and persistent explanation. He stressed on the need to teach them the necessity of transferring the entire state power to the Soviets. This was an important task set before the Bolsheviks. He also laid lot of emphasis on organisation. He said 'To achieve such a victory (victory over capitalists), to have the workers and poor peasants take power, keep that power and make proper use of it, you will need organisation, organisation and organisation...Don't put your trust in words. Don't be misled by promises. Don't overestimate your strength. Organise at every factory, in every regiment and every company, in every residential block. Work at your organising every day, every hour; do that work yourselves, for this is something you cannot entrust to anybody else. Work to steadily, soundly and indestructibly build up full confidence in the advanced workers, on the part of the masses... Such is the one guarantee of success'.

Lenin taught the working class about the importance of forging unity with the peasantry. Addressing the All Russian Trade Union conference he urged the workers to take the initiative to organise the agricultural workers and win over the majority of people to their side. 'The first commandment of any trade union movement is not to rely on the State but to rely on the strength of one's own class. The transfer of power to the revolutionary, oppressed class is the only way out of the present crisis, and the only remedy for economic dislocation and the war', he said.

These words of Lenin are as relevant now, when the working class is being attacked by the capitalist class trying to protect their profits in the wake of the systemic crisis of capitalism, as they were around a hundred years ago.

Today major sections of the working class in our country are under the influence of the ideology of the ruling classes. The ruling classes are attacking the lives, livelihoods, working conditions and basic rights of all

sections of the toiling people – the workers, agricultural workers, peasants, artisans etc – through the neoliberal regime. These policies are meant to transfer public wealth into the hands of a few big private corporations. At the same time they are able to create illusions among the people through their false promises and slogans though people are slowly getting disillusioned. They are trying to weaken and thwart united struggles of the working people by evoking communal passions, caste feelings, and regional sentiments.

Bringing the working class and the toiling people from the influence of the ruling classes requires 'patient, systematic and persistent explanation and teaching' as Lenin taught us. *Ten Days that Shook the World* says that during the Revolution 'All Russia was learning to read and *reading* – politics, economics, history – because the people wanted to *know*... Hundreds of thousands of pamphlets were distributed by thousands of organisations and poured into the armies, the villages, factories, the streets.' People absorbed them like hot sand drinks water! These 'were not fables, falsified history, diluted religion, and the cheap fiction that corrupts but social and economic theories, philosophy, the works of Tolstoy, Gogol and Gorky...'

Today we need to create such urge among the working class and the toiling people to know, to understand the truth about the link between their day to day issues and the policies being pursued by the ruling classes, whatever sweet and attractive slogans they mouth. At the same time we have to make serious efforts to satisfy that urge to know and understand the truth by exposing the politics behind the policies through their own experiences; using the language that they can easily understand. We have to develop the class consciousness of the working class to realise its historic role in ending the inhuman capitalist exploitation and replacing with an exploitation free socialist system. We have to prepare it to discharge this role.

The Great October Revolution teaches us that this is the only way to end the exploitative capitalist system.

STATES

Punjab

Agitation against Online registration



CITU unions held rallies and staged demonstrations in district headquarters in protest against Punjab government's decision on online registration and renewal of registration of construction workers. The rallies and demonstrations had massive response in Ludhiana, Ropar, Barnala, Mansa, Sangrur, Lohian, Patiala Jalandhar, Pathankot, Hoshiarpur and in other districts. Memoranda were submitted to the chief minister through the district deputy commissioners.

The rallies were addressed by CITU and unions leaders. The rallies demanded restoration of offline registration by the labour department authorities; coverage of MNREGA workers under the construction workers welfare Act without any condition; minimum wages of the construction and MNREGA workers be raised to Rs.600 per day and state welfare board be reconstituted immediately with representation of all the central trade unions in it. The rallies also gave call to the workers to make Delhi Mahapadav on 9-11 November historic by their massive participation.

Some Important Points

Central Advisory Board Meeting Under Minimum Wages Act

Dr Kashmir Singh Thakur

A meeting of The Central Advisory Board under Minimum Wages Act was held on 3 August 2017 in Sharam Shakti Bhawan in New Delhi. The meeting was held after the gap of 7 years. The agenda was to consider the following items:

1.
 - i. Procedure for fixation/revision of the Minimum Wages
 - ii. Implementation of Minimum Wages Act, 1948
 - a) Implementation under Central sphere
 - b) Implementation under State sphere
 - iii. Adoption of variable Dearness Allowance (DA), information regarding adoption of variable Dearness Allowance (DA) in states / union territories
 - iv. Fixation of Minimum Rates of wages in the light of Supreme Court Judgement 1991
 - v. Fixation of Minimum Rates of wages not below National floor level Minimum Wage
2.
 - i. Creation of separate schedule of employment for Mess / canteen contract workers working in IITs / NITs, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and all government institutions and Hospitals
 - ii. Inclusion of Railways in the notification S.O. No. 188 (E)
 - iii. Inclusion of Home based workers in the Scheduled Employment.
3.
 - i. All the state governments to be advised to link Minimum Wages with consumer price index

Items no.2 and no.3 were included in the agenda at the initiatives of CITU. Initiating the discussion on the agenda no.1, all central trade unions (CTU) representatives pressed for fixation of Minimum Wages per recommendations of 15th Indian Labour Conference (ILC) and the Supreme Court judgement of 1991. In this regard CITU representative said that the Government has already accepted the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission (CPC). The 7th CPC has recommended that the Minimum Wages of the unskilled workers be fixed at Rs.18000 per month calculated on the basis of 15th ILC recommendations and Supreme Court's judgement. Central Government must not adopt double standard and Minimum Wages should not be less than Rs.18000 per month.

On implementation of Minimum Wages, it was pointed out that after the adoption of portal system by the Central Government, the labour laws violation has increased many fold. All CTU representatives had argued for abolition of the portal system and free-hand should be given to the central labour officials to inspect in the case of any complaint with regard to violation of labour laws.

It was strange and shocking that all state government representatives were invited only from BJP ruled states like Haryana, M.P., Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh. All of them had opposed hike in the minimum wages and opposed Rs.18000 per month as minimum wage as was recommended by 7th CPC. BMS representative vehemently argued for Rs.18000 per month as minimum wages, but BJP ruled state government representatives were opposing increase in minimum wages.

Majority of employers' representatives argued against increase in the minimum wages and Rs.18000 as minimum wages. One representative of the employers group suggested that Central government should adopt Kerala model with regard to the Wages and Wage Protection System for implementation. He said, "We have some industries in Kerala and we are not finding any difficulty in implementation of Minimum Wages." He submitted some relevant points in respect of Wage Protection System implementation in Kerala as follows:

- **Wage Protection System (WPS)** – Through WPS, employers of certain scheduled employments have to upload the wages details in the new format of register of employment and wages in form XIV through Labour Commissioner Automation System.

- The Inspector, authorized by Labour Commissioner, shall electronically authenticate the register in Form XIV which is uploaded in the portal.
- Once authenticated, employer may take a printout and keep the hard copies which are duly signed by him or same shall be maintained electronically.
- At the time of inspection, the employer shall take a printout of the same and submit for verification.
- Payment should be made via WPS (labour commissioner automation system) to respective principal banker.
- Wage slip, generated through wage protection system, shall be issued to all employees one day prior to the payment.

Benefits for Employer

- Register of wages, Register of employment, Register of fines, Wages slip etc. need not to be maintained in hard copy.
- Employer can ensure that employees have received the wages correctly.
- Complaints from employees related to their wages can be avoided.
- Inspections from labour departments will be reduced.

Consequence of Non-implementation

- Authority may start issuing notice to each establishment for non-implementation of Wage Protection System.
- If notice issued under various Act and non-implementation of WPS is one of the non-compliance observed, notice will remain open till the implementation of Wage Protection System and subsequently referred to court.
- The documents submitted for notice of closure is not accepted by the respective authority for want of implementation of Wage Protection System.

Current Scenario

- Authority may refer the notice to court for non-implementation of Wage Protection System along with other violations under various Acts.

Issue of fixation of minimum rates of wages not below 'national floor level minimum wage' was also placed in the meeting. It was informed that national floor level minimum wage was last revised to Rs.176 per day effective from 01.06.2017 based on 12 monthly averages of CPI for the working class.

CITU representative reminded the meeting that in the last meeting of the Board, it was decided that the agenda of national floor level minimum wages would not be put in future meetings. The national floor level minimum wages has no statutory force and it will give handle to the exploiters. All the CTU representatives demanded this item to be dropped from the agenda.

It was unanimously decided in the meeting that separate schedule of employment will be created for the workers working in the mess / canteen of IITs, NITs, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and in all central government's institutes, hospitals etc.. It was also agreed to create separate schedule of employment for contract workers in railways and for home based workers.

All the CTU representatives expressed their concern that some states like Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim were not adopting the provision of variable dearness allowance linked with consumer price index. Most of these states are ruled by the BJP. In order to protect the minimum wages of the workers against inflation, the provision of VDA linked to CPI has to be adopted.

The meeting concluded with the CTU representatives hope that the recommendations of Board would include fixation of minimum wage at Rs.18000 and the same would be accepted by the Central government.

Trade Unions' Joint Conventions in States

For the preparations of campaign at the grass root on background, issues and demands of the working class of India and mobilisation for the 3 days All India Mahapadav in Delhi on 9-11 November challenging the Modi government's anti-workers and anti-people policies and actions; state units of 10 central trade unions and national and state federations and unions are holding state level, lower levels and industrywise workers conventions in response to the call of National Convention of Workers on 8 August. Following are some of the reports, available at the CITU centre.

Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh state units of central trade unions and the federations of central and state government employees, bank, insurance, BSNL, defence, BHEL and of other PSUs held a state level joint convention at Gandhi Bhavan in Bhopal on 7 October.

CITU state general secretary Promod Pradhan placed the convention resolution explaining the background, issues and the movement being pursued jointly by the trade unions at national level. AITUC national secretary Vidyasagar Giri addressing the convention as the main speaker called upon the workers of the state to participate massively in the Mahapadav in Delhi 9-11 November and prepare for indefinite strike next year.

In support of the resolution, the convention was addressed by the state leaders including Ramraj Tiwary of INTUC, J. C. Barai of UTUC, Basanti Malviya of SEWA, V. K. Sharma of bank unions, Nabendu Chakravorty of AIIEA, H. S. Thakur of BSNLEU and R. S. Baghel of central government employees. CITU state president Ram Vilas Goswami was in the presidium.

Chhattisgarh

A joint convention of the state units of the central trade unions and national and state federations and unions was held at J N Pandey School hall in the state capital Raipur on 24 September joined by thousands of workers from different parts of the state representing organised and unorganised sectors including bank, insurance, state government, railways, coal, steel, electricity, Anganwadi and others.

The main resolution, calling upon the workers to join the Delhi Mahapadav in large numbers and to prepare for indefinite strike next year, was moved by CITU state secretary Dharmaraj Mahapatra. As the main speaker AICCTU general secretary Rajiv Dhimri explained the 12 point demands of the trade unions. The state leaders including AITUC state general secretary Harnath Singh, CITU state general secretary A. K. Lal, INTUC state president Sanjay Singh, Bhimrai Bagde of AICCTU, Class III government employees union's state president Rakesh Sahu, RDIEEU general secretary Atul Deshmukh, S. P. Bhattacharya of BSNLEU and Laksman Sahu of Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha addressed the convention.

By separate resolutions on state related issues the convention decided to intensify movement against increasing neglect of safety measures by the corporates in the state causing increasing number of accidents and death of workers; condemned the state government for withdrawing notified minimum wage under pressure from the employers and decided to launch movement for implementation of the minimum wages; condemned the state government for forced retirement on completion of 50 years of age or 20 years of service, whichever earlier and to divert attention from growing people's anger against its misrule by promoting communal division and adopting authoritarian and fascist measures.

The convention presidium consisted of Ramavatar Algamkar of INTUC, S. P. Dey of CITU, R. D. C. P.

Rao of AITUC, B. L. Netam of AICCTU and state government employees union's leader Narendra Chandrakar.

Odisha

A state level joint convention of central trade unions and federations was held in the Institute of Engineers Hall at Bhubaneswar on 23 September calling upon the unions to launch massive statewide campaign and for mobilisation of the workers for Delhi Mahapadav.

CITU state general secretary Bishnu Mohanty began the convention with his introductory remarks on Modi government's move on anti-workers labour laws amendments and on 12 point demands of the trade unions. AITUC state general secretary Souribandhu Kar placed the convention declaration. The convention was addressed by Shibaji Patnaik of CITU, R. K. Panda of AITUC, Radhakanta Sethi of AICCTU, Susil Giri of BEFI, Jayanta Pati of AOBEP, R. N. Dhal of CCGEW, Nirmal Das of OSGEF, Bamadev Misra of OSGIEA, Bruhaspati Samal of NFPE and others. It decided to hold district level similar conventions in October.

The presidium of the convention consisted of Lambodar Nayak of CITU, Akshay Tripathi of INTUC, Ashok Das of AITUC, Bidyadhar Barik of HMS, Sambhunath Nayak of AIUTUC, Nitya Kishore Mohanty of AICCTU.

Punjab

At the joint call of trade unions of Punjab an impressive joint convention was held in Bhakana Bhawan in Chandigarh. The Convention was chaired jointly by CITU state president Vijay Misra, AITUC state president Bant Brara, INTUC state vice president Mangat Khan, AICCTU state president Amrik Singh and Inderjeet Singh Garewal.

The Convention was addressed by CITU state general secretary Raghunath Singh, AITUC state general secretary Bant Brar, Rajwinder Singh Rana of AICCTU and CTU Punjab general secretary Natha Singh.

The convention gave call to launch joint campaign from 16 October by holding rallies in front of deputy commissioners' offices and hold rallies and conventions in districts.

CITU's Independent Jathas: CITU brought out statewide independent jathas, led by state office bearers, for campaign and mobilisation for Delhi Mahapadav which received massive response throughout the state.

Rajasthan

The state units of INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU and RajCITU jointly held a state level workers convention at Jaipur on 7 October joined by about 500 trade union activists from different parts of the state.

The convention was addressed by national leader of INTUC Jagdish Srimali, AITUC national secretary Amarjit Kaur, CITU national vice president J. S. Majumdar and Rampal Saini of RajCITU as main speakers and by others.

The speakers had drawn attention to increasing problems of workers, peasants and of the people; attack on social security and cut in subsidies; loss of jobs and unemployment; massive privatisation including railways; communal division and increasing authoritarianism; etc and called upon the workers to make 9-11 November Mahapadav in Delhi a historic one sending strong signal of workers resistance.

The convention was addressed by state leaders of central trade unions including Binode Mehta, M. L. Yadav, Anil Vyas, Ravindra Shukla, Ramesh, D. K. Changani, S. K. Sharma, B. S. Rana, P. S. Parmar, R. K. Singh and Mahesh Misra of bank union.

Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand Joint Trade Unions Coordination Committee held a joint trade union convention at Shibaji Dharmashala in Dehradun on 8 October joined by trade unions activists of INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AICCTU, UTUC and in defence, central government, bank and insurance.

The convention was conducted by the convener of the Coordination Committee and CITU state treasurer Birendra Bhandari. The convention was addressed by AITUC national secretary Bant Singh Barar, INTUC state president and former MLA Hira Singh Bist, CITU state general secretary Mahendra Prasad Jakhmola,

Samar Bhandari of AITUC, Chandaula of AICCTU, Jagdish Chandra Chhimbai of defence, Murarilal Nautiyal of bank and others.

The convention adopted resolutions on 12 point demands to central government and also 12 point demands to the state government.

It was presided by Bant Singh Barar, Ashok Sharma, Hira Singh Bist, CITU state vice president Mahvir Sharma, Ugrasen from HMS, Chandela, Purana Singh from defence, Sohan Singh Rajwar from bank and Kul Bahdur Karki of central government employees.

Andhra Pradesh

A state level joint convention was held at Vijayawada on 10 September attended by about 600 trade union activists of INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, TUCC, AIUTUC, IFTU and YSRTU. Representatives from central and state public sector, BSNL, banks, insurance have also attended.

West Bengal

Around 9,000 workers from West Bengal will participate in the historic Mahapadav in Delhi on 9-11 November and, in solidarity, all sections of the workers and other working people will stage demonstration in front the factories, workers residential areas and industrial areas in the State on all those days, said CITU state general secretary Anadi Kumar Sahu at the conclusion of state joint convention of central trade unions and federations in the overflowing Yuba Kendra auditorium in Kolkata on 13 October. On 9 November, a rally will be brought in Kolkata city.

Such joint conventions will be held industrywise and districtwise by 18 October. Immediately after culmination of BPMO rally in the state, extensive campaign will continue till 9 November holding gate meetings, street corner meetings, bringing out rallies and distributing leaflets and pamphlets in innumerable number across the State.

Those who addressed the convention include CITU state president Subhash Mukherjee, state INTUC president Ramen Pandey, Ashok Ghosh of UTUC, Basudeb Basu of AICCTU, Ujjwal Choudhury of AITUC, Santi Ghosh of AIUTUC, Shyamal Kanungo of TUCC; and Joydeb Dasgupta from BEFI, Binay Krishna Chatterjee of Mercantile Federation, P. K. Das of Steel Workers Federation, Samir Bhattacharjee of 12 July Committee, Animesh Mitra of BSNLEU, Priya Nath Roy of ERMU and Dwijendra Nath Sahu of Defence Employees Federation.

35,000 posters, 50,000 leaflets, 10,000 pamphlets and other campaign materials are being issued from the State centre. In addition, all district committees and federations are also preparing such campaign materials including banners and hoardings.

The presidium of the convention consisted of Subhash Mukherjee, Ranjit Guha, Amar Sen, Pradip Banerjee, Atanu Chakraborty, Bidyut Poddar, Anup Chakraborty and Ashok Ghose.

STATES

Telangana

Beedi Workers Agitation

Telangana Beedi & Cigar Workers Union of CITU organised dharnas in district headquarters on 8 June demanding no GST on Beedis, minimum wage, subsistence allowance and against online payment during demonetisation agitation in Mandal headquarters.

The union staged a state level dharna in front of the state labour commissioner's office on 12 July demanding withdrawal of G.O.No.81 and implementation of G.O.No.41 for minimum wages. About 1500 beedi workers coming from 28 mandals participated. The union distributed 75,000 handbills during campaign.

(Input: S. Rama)

INDUSTRIES & SECTORS

Central Public Sector

National Workshop of CPSUs

A national workshop of Central Public Sector Units (CPSUs) was held at Sundraya Vigyan Kendram in Hyderabad on 22 October participated by about 200 leaders and activists including the national leaders of the central trade unions, 149 leaders and activists representing the CPSUs across the industrial sectors in the country and the trade union activists of CPSUs in Hyderabad.

INTUC president G Sanjeeva Reddy initiated the discussion by his inaugural presentation. CITU general secretary Tapan Sen placed the background note. H. Mahadevan of AITUC, G. Yelliah of HMS, S. Subburaman of LPF, convener of JAF of Bangalore PSUs Menakshi Sundaram and convener of Hyderabad PSU Coordination Committee also contributed by their interventions. 26 delegates took part in the discussion on the background note.

On behalf of the presidium, CITU national secretary Swadesh Dev Roye placed the 'Conclusions of the Workshop' of the workshop signed by all constituent organizations. It was unanimously adopted.

Conclusions of the Workshop

This joint National Workshop participated by the leading representatives of unions functioning in CPSUs irrespective of affiliations notes with grave concern the arrogant pursuit of hostile and destructive policies of the NDA Government of the day against the Public Sector Enterprises and the work force in CPSUs as whole.

Present policy regime seeks to completely dismantle the entire public sector network of the country, gloriously serving the national economy, through disinvestment/privatization/strategic sale through various means. Such move is utterly detrimental to the interest of the national economy and the people. The CPSU workers have already been struggling against such policies unitedly.

At the same time, the Government has been pursuing a policy of extensive changes in the labour laws designed to impose virtual slavery on the workers depriving them of even the core and basic rights. The Code on Wages Bill, Code on Industrial Relations Bill and the Code on Social Security Bill designed by the Government of India have already been brought in public domain which makes the evil intention of the Government amply clear.

In this regard the Workshop condemns the NDA Government for the most undemocratic ban imposed on participation of INTUC in all tripartite and bipartite forums. Such shocking step against the largest central trade union of the country clearly speaks about the authoritarian and vindictive attitude of the NDA Government against trade union movement. We must fight it jointly.

The Government has issued pay revision notification for the Executives in CPSUs, in acceptance of the recommendations of Justice Satish Chandra Committee, imposing atrocious conditionalities and dictats in the name of "affordability", "financial implications", "stringent conditional fitment formula" "10-year tenure"; denial of wage revision for huge numbers of CPSUs in the name of affordability, many of them in core and strategic sectors of the economy and despite having excellent physical performance but financial performance not in full commensuration with such bright physical performance, not to speak of the sick PSUs.

It should be noted that despite capabilities, the profitability of CPSUs is not getting fully realized only because of the anti-PSU and pro-private-corporate and pro-MNC policies of the Government. Most of the sick CPSUs have turned sick owing to same hostile policies of the Modi Government at the centre. Such a situation cannot be accepted by the trade union movement irrespective of affiliations in CPSUs. Workers must be mobilized to resist such atrocious move of the NDA Government.

The Workshop unanimously concludes that in the aforementioned challenging situation we have to

conduct negotiations for the forthcoming 8th round of wage-revision. To defeat the conspiracy of the Government to deprive the CPSU workers of their right to have satisfactory upward revision of wages, allowances, perks, social security benefits; 'Unity and Struggles' of the CPSU workers irrespective of affiliations is a must. The Coal wage revision agreement will definitely give us big advantage to achieve our aims.

Further, this Joint National Workshop of Workers and Unions in CPSUs unanimously formulates the following basic requirements to be observed / implemented by the CPSU unions in all their collective activities including the wage negotiations process:

- No to Disinvestment/Privatization/Strategic Sale of PSUs
- No to Contracturisation / Outsourcing of permanent and perennial nature jobs in PSUs
- Financial and Policy support for revival of sick PSUs and wage revision for the concerned employees.
- Tenure of wage revision should be not more than five years as already achieved by the six CPSUs noted above
- Wage revision for the workman category must ensure improvement of relativity of wages in favour of the workman vis-à-vis the executive category.
- Anti-worker terms and conditions being imposed by DPE Guidelines on wage revision must be totally opposed and resisted in the wage negotiations forums of all the CPSUs with united struggles.
- Upward revision of wage, allowances, other monetary and non-monetary benefits must not be linked with productivity;
- Separate incentive scheme and not Performance Related Payment (PRP) may have linkage with productivity.
- Wage rise for the contract workers in PSUs ensuring at least the minimum wage and benefits available to the permanent workers in all the respective PSUs.
- Filling up of all vacancies for workman category in PSUs through fresh recruitment of regular workers.

All the CPSU unions have to maintain close coordination and exchanges information among themselves while participating in the negotiations in the respective CPSUs. And in all the CPSUs we must make serious collective effort to defeat the utterly negative and extremely restrictive recommendations of Justice Satish Chandra Committee and the related DPE guidelines in the process of wage negotiations in CPSUs.

The Workshop appeals to all public sector workers to actively participate in the 3-day 'Relay Dharna' near Parliament house, New Delhi, on 9 -11 November 2017, targeted to be participated by lakhs of workers, to press for the 12-point Charter of Demands (includes very prominently the above demands of PSU workers) adopted by all Central Trade Unions and National Federations in the country.

G Sanjeeva Reddy
INTUC

H Mahadevan
AITUC

G Yelliah
HMS

Tapan Sen
CITU

Sanmugan,
LPF

Joint Action Front, Bengaluru ;

PSU TU Coordination Committee, Hyderabad

Agitation against Privatisation of PSUs in Kerala

Raj Bhavan March

About 15,000 workers of public sector joined by workers of private and unorganised sector marched and held a massive rally in front of the Raj Bhavan in Thiruvananthapuram on 13 September organised by public sector coordination committee of central trade unions - CITU, INTUC, HMS, AITUC, UTUC, AIUTUC, SEWA - and also of TUCI, NTUI, KTUC, AICTU, NLO, JTUC, NLC, INLC and STU demanding to stop privatisation and disinvestment of central public sector units (CPSUs) including proposed disinvestment of BSNL, Hindustan Newsprint, Hindustan Latex, and Cochin Shipyard; allow working capital to PSUs; pay 10 months due wages to HOC workers; reduce penal interest from 13.5% to 4 % on loan to FACT; protect HMT, HIL, IRE; withdraw Port Authority Bill; stop PPP activities in defence sector; save Cochin Port; stop privatisation of railways etc.

Inaugurating the March, CITU state president Anathalavattom Anandan said that the job security of 13 lakh permanent employees and 20 lakh contract employees in CPSUs is at stake. CPSUs are the backbone of the country's economy. The central government has decided to sell Hindustan Latex, Hindustan Newsprints, and Hindustan Organic Chemicals. The centre has fast-tracked privatisation of railways. The management of railway stations would soon be handed over to private companies.

INTUC state president R. Chandrasekharan presided and AITUC state secretary J. Udayabhanu, CITU national secretary K. Chandranpillai, K.N. Gopinath of CITU and others also addressed the rally. A memorandum on demands was submitted to the Governor P. Sathasivam.

In Ernakulam district, a joint jeep jatha was brought out on 7-8 September led by K. N. Gopinath of CITU, K. K. Ibrahimkutty of INTUC, Regunath Panavelly of STU, K. N. Gopi of AITUC, T. B. Mini of TUCI. K. Chandranpillai inaugurated the jatha in front of the gate of Cochin Refinery and Hindustan Organic Chemicals.

'Lighted' Rally against BEML Privatisation

Organised by CITU, workers of entire Palaghat district joined a massive 20,000 strong Candle Light Rally in Palaghat town on 7 October protesting against central government's move of privatisation of BEML and on other demands of CPSUs including for takeover of Instrumentation Palaghat by Kerala Government; saving Indian Telephone Industry and Fluid Control etc.

CITU national secretary and state general secretary Elamaram Kareem inaugurated the 'Lighted Rally'. K. Chandranpillai, M.B. Rajesh MP, R.G. Pillai, M. Chandran, Hamsa, Achuthan, T.K. Prabhakaran, Unni P, K. K. Divakaran addressed the Rally.

Two district jathas campaigned for the 'Lighted Rally' which were inaugurated CITU national secretaries K. Chandranpillai and K. K. Divakaran.

Save HNL Dharna

About 2000 workers of HNL and of FACT, Shipyard, HOC, HIL, HMT, Cochin port, BSNL and from other sectors including scheme workers participated in the mass dharna in front of Hindustan News Print Gate at Velloor in Kottayam district of Kerala on 11 October.

CITU state general secretary Elamaram Kareem inaugurated and K. Chandranpillai, K.N. Gopinath, M.G. Aji, T.Reghunath, Adv. P.K. Harikumar, Mohan of HNL union addressed the rally in front of HNL gate.

Joint Convention on CPSUs

Earlier, against privatisation drive of CPSUs by the central government and for their strengthening a joint trade unions convention was held at Ernakulam on 5 July. CITU national secretary and its state general secretary Elamaram Kareem inaugurated it. Statewide campaign and agitation were organised by wearing of badge, holding gate meetings, bringing out rallies etc.

Defending the Public sector in Andhra Pradesh

On the issue of defending public sector a statewide campaign was launched with collection of signatures, organising jeep jathas and staging cultural programmes. 30,000 copies of three separate pamphlets were distributed. 15,000 booklets were distributed in Visakhapatnam. Opposing privatisation of Visakha Port a round table meeting was held on 23 September; a seminar was organised on 24 September attended by 250 trade union activists; and campaigned with 4000 pamphlets and 2000 posters. A convention was held and 2000 pamphlets were distributed opposing the proposed sale of Hindustan Zinc's lands.

Defence Minister Meeting boycotted by Defence Employees

The then Union Defence Minister Arun Jaitley, in a desperate bid to mislead the workers that the government was in fact trying to protect the public sector defence establishments while proposing their disinvestment, visited BDL units in Hyderabad and Madak on 27 August. BDL is targeted for 25 per cent disinvest. At Jaitley's instance the management arranged a meeting with the employees and workers in the afternoon.

At the initiative of the recognised Bharat Dynamics Employees Union of CITU, all BDL unions including both INTUC unions, BMS, TRSKV and independent BDEA came on a common platform to oppose Central government's move of disinvestment, launched joint campaign among the workers and boycotted en block the meeting of the Defence Minister of India. Management arranged special buses to bring workers from BDL's Banur unit which also came back empty. The employees of DRDO, other defence establishment in Hyderabad also boycotted the meeting.

Modi government's minister and disinvestment policy had a big rebuff from the defence employees at Hyderabad.

Scheme Workers

Resist Attempt to Dismantle ICDS

On 10 October, through its state committees, CITU secretariat has sent a countrywide alert and called for mobilisation and action of the ICDS employees and wider sections of the people against Modi government's recent attempt to dismantle ICDS.

The government has proposed direct cash transfer replacing present take-home-ration; and distribution of packaged food through post offices in place of hot cooked meals in Anganwadi centres. As directed by the centre, some states have also opened pre-school nurseries. All these will lead to redundancy of the Anganwadi centres and ultimate closure of ICDS which will end food (nutrition) entitlement to 8 crore children, under 6 years, and 1.9 crore mothers under Food Security Act; and jobloss of 26 lakh Anganwadi workers and helpers.

This is another step following withdrawal of subsidies in PDS, cooking gas etc; targeting many other schemes; and also government's proposals in the Code on Social Security. These are integral part of BJP government's overall plan to do away with subsidies and drastically reduce government expenditure in all welfare schemes and projects.

Some BJP's state governments are making efforts to disrupt and weaken CITU Anganwadi unions. The RSS led communal forces are also trying to increase their influence among the scheme workers, particularly among the Anganwadi workers. Weakening of ICDS can lead to overall weakening of the trade union movement, particularly among the women and rural workers.

Anganwadi employees' CITU federation AIFAWH launched movement including immediate protest on 22 and 23 September, protest week on 2-9 October, signature campaign among the beneficiaries and public, etc.

CITU secretariat called entire CITU to get fully involved in the struggle against this conspiracy to dismantle ICDS; support and help AIFAWH programmes; and launch campaign, also during 9-11 November

Mahapadav campaign, to build resistance at grass-root level by Anganwadi employees, beneficiaries and other sections of the people.

Global Nutrition Report, 2016

ICDS is an important scheme to prevent anemia in women of reproductive age and stunted growth of children. Following are from Global Nutrition Report, 2016 about status of both in India in ranking and prevalence.

- **Prevalence of anemia in women of reproductive age: Ranking – 170; Prevalence - 48.1%**
- **Stunting Prevalence: Ranking - 114; Prevalence - 38.7%**

Government’s Misleading Statement

It seems, in the face of countrywide protest including by AIFAWH, the union ministry of women and child development (WCD) issued statement on 12 October 2017 denying the reported Government’s proposal to discontinue ‘*Supplementary Nutrition Program*’ under ICDS to be replaced by ‘*Conditional Cash Transfer*’.

This statement raises more questions than clarity said a AIFAWH statement demanding clarification on widely media reported WCD minister’s comments, while addressing the meeting of the officials from 130 districts on 19 September, 2017 that “*Anganwadi stopped being an effective delivery system 20 years ago;*” and suggesting nutrient packages be delivered through post offices; as also widely reported WCD secretary’s statement, “*DBT (direct benefits transfer) is being considered in the Ministry and a decision will be taken soon. ... In the first phase, we will cover 300 of the most backward districts ... followed by the remaining districts a year later.*” Ministry’s statement on 9 March 2017 also stated, “... the Government is also exploring the possibility of Conditional Cash Transfer in lieu of THR (Take Home Ration) in selected districts as a pilot as one of the options.” Accordingly, the ministry’s letter F.No.19/10/2016-WBP dated 5 January 2017 directed the Governments of Delhi, Uttarakhand and Odisha to immediately start implementing the pilot projects under ISSNIP replacing THR with Conditional Cash Transfer. The Ministry might have issued such letters to other states also.

Barbaric Police Attack on Anganwadi Employees

The police resorted to barbaric attack in the midnight of 23-24 October with lathi and water cannon charge on the 10,000 Anganwadi employees, who were on peaceful indefinite state level Mahapadav in Patiala at the call of AMU, the CITU Anganwadi union in Punjab, demanding reversal of Congress-led Punjab government’s action of indiscriminately opening pre-primary sections in government schools and Direct Cash Transfer in accordance with the conspiracy of BJP-led Modi government at the Centre to close Anganwadi centres and ending ICDS scheme. Police attack injured several leaders and workers including CITU national secretary and AIFAWH president Usha Rani and arrested her and other leaders.

AIFAWH strongly condemned this cowardly act of Punjab government and demanded immediate release of the arrested leaders, reversal of its policy of Direct Cash Transfer and opening of pre-primary sections in the government schools. AIFAWH gave call for countrywide protest.



Mahapadav in Patiala

STATES

Madhya Pradesh

3 Days Successful Strike of Anganwadi Employees

About 40,000 Anganwadi employees resorted to continuous strike for all 3 days on 9-11 October in most of the districts particularly in Jabalpur, Gwalior, Riwa, Bhopal, Mandala, Siwani, Anuppur, Shahdol, Hosangabad, Guna, Katni, Betul, Muraina, Balaghat, Sidhi and Indore districts and for 3 days to 2 days in the rest of the 38 districts of the total 51 districts in the state. Most of the Anganwadi centres remained closed and rallies were brought out and demonstrations were staged in district and Tahsil headquarters in all three days submitting memoranda to the chief minister, minister for women and child development and the chief secretary through the district administration. In several districts the Anganwadi employees staged day-night stay.

The strike was in response to the 3 days strike call of Anganwadi Karyakarta Ebam Sahayika Ekta Union of CITU demanding immediate notification of the recommendations of Minimum Wage Advisory Board for Anganwadi workers and helpers and for other demands. Mainly at the initiative and agitation by CITU and its Anganwadi union, including gherao of labour commissioner's office on 26 October 2015, Minimum Wage Advisory Board's 22 January 2016 meeting had unanimously recommended placing Anganwadi 'workers' in 'semi-skilled' and 'helpers' in 'unskilled' categories and, accordingly, fixing notified state minimum wages for them. However, the government is sitting on the minimum wage recommendations for Anganwadi employees for over 21 months now.

Other demands of the strike include national demands like recognition as government employees, Rs.18000 as minimum wage, Rs.3000 as minimum pension, promotional opportunities of workers to supervisors and helpers to workers, conversion of mini centres as full-fledged centres, strengthening of Anganwadi centres, to stop recruitment of *Anganwadi Dldis* without wage, etc.

CITU state office bearers allotted themselves territorial responsibilities for preparation, mobilisation and demonstrative programmes to make the Anganwadi employees strike successful in the state.

Kerala

State Agitations & Activities

On Issues of School Health Nurses: 600 school health nurses of National Health Mission staged dharna in front of DHM office demanding regularisation of job and wages. The dharna was inaugurated by CITU state president Anthalavattom Anandhan.

On Issues of Fishers: Fish Workers Federation organised a March to Raj Bhavan on 3 July protesting against fishing policies of the central government. The March was inaugurated by CITU state general secretary Elamaram Kareem.

A state level seminar on the problems of inland fishing was held at Vaikkam on 8 July participated by eminent scientists and 465 workers.

A march and dharna were staged at 10 centres pursuing demands of the fishermen. Special conventions of fishermen were held in 10 districts and organizing committees were formed for the success of the agitation.

On Issues of FCI Workers: A joint trade union March and picketing were held in front of Thiruvananthapuram regional office of FCI on 4 July demanding equal wage for equal work, end the privatisation in FCI godowns, strengthening of the PDS etc. CITU state secretary V. Sivan Kutty inaugurated.

On Issues of Anganwadi Employees: Anganwadi employees observed on 10 July as their

rights day' in the state. 15,752 employees joined marches and rallies in districts demanding across India Rs.18,000 as minimum wages, ESI and PF facilities, re-examination of repetitive work etc. In Thiruvananthapuram, the March and dharna were held in front of the state government secretariat.

On Issues of Mid Day Meal Workers: State Mid Day Meal Workers Federation held a March to Secretariat on 22 July joined by more than 1100 workers raising their national demand of recognition as government employees and accompanying facilities. CITU state secretary Kattakada Sasi inaugurated the March.

On Issues of Street Vendors: More than 1300 street vendors resorted to a day's hunger strike in front of the state secretariat on 27 July demanding job security and protection of street vendors, to stop their unlawful eviction etc. The programme was inaugurated by V. Sivankutty.

About 1000 street vendors joined protest marches in 12 districts against the attack in VKTF state committee office by RSS goons.

A state level vehicle jatha campaign during 27 September – 11 October demanding implementation of welfare board and a secretariat march on 17 October were scheduled.

On Issues of Coir Workers: About 8,000 coir workers joined marches and dharnas in front of the civil supplies offices in Attingal, Kollam, Karunagappally, Alapuzha, Cherthala, Vaikom, Harippad, North Paravoor, Kozhikode, Koyilandi and Kannur on 31 July raising the demand to include coir workers in the priority list of PDS.

Issues of KSEB Workers: About 3000 KSEB workers staged dharna in front of the Electricity Bhavan on 11 August against the Electricity Board's decision of online transfer, reduction of posts and denying the promotional opportunities.

On Issues of Water Authority Employees: About 1000 employees participated in the dharna in all district centres on 3 August under the banner of Water Authority Employees Union raising demand for strengthening people friendly water policy, appointing mechanical superintendent in all subdivisions, ending outsourcing activities and implementing technical special rule etc.

Workshop of Working Women

On working women's campaign and agitation to pursue demands of quality work and wages; elimination of gender discrimination in wages and promotion; safe and dignified work place; safety in the night work, separate toilet facilities; accommodation at fair and reasonable rate; safe travelling facility; control on price rise etc a state level workshop of working women of Kerala was held at BTR Bhavan in Thiruvananthapuram on 29 July.

350 leaders and activists from CITU, AIDWA, Confederation of Central Government Employees, FSETO, AIIEA, BEFI, KMSRA, BSNLEU participated in the workshop inaugurated by CITU national president Dr. K. Hemalata. P. Nandha Kumar, V. Sivankutty, AIDWA state president P. Sathi Devi addressed the workshop.

Andhra Pradesh

State Agitations & Activities

Municipal Workers 3 days strike

Mainly initiated by CITU, 29,953 out of total 38,000 municipal contract workers went on 3 days strike on 11-13 July under the banner of joint action committee (JAC). This strike was in continuation of struggle demanding scrapping of works contracts system. The government called JAC leadership for discussions on 12 July. Based on the assurance of the principal secretary that a joint meeting with the ministers subcommittee would be held and till that time tenders for work contract would not be opened, JAC postponed the strike. On 17 July, three ministers subcommittee held talks with JAC and reiterated their stand of giving works contracts in all departments.

Asha Workers 3 Days Strike

Asha workers went on strike for 3 days on 5-7 September demanding Rs.6,000 as wage at par with that of Telangana government. Despite government's attempt to sabotage the strike, 25,000 Asha workers participated in it.

10,342 Asha workers participated in dharna in 409 PHCs on 5 September; 12,246 of them joined dharnas in 438 mandals on 6 September and 12,600 of them joined *Rasta Roko* and dharna programmes in 130 divisional headquarters on 7 September.

120 Asha workers from 8 districts participated in the 21 July *Chalo Delhi* programme. 30,000 pamphlets were distributed and 5 lakh signatures were collected. On 11 September, 5,000 Asha workers from 12 districts participated in *Chalo Vijayawada* programme.

Mid Day Meal Workers Agitation

Opposing the system of centralized kitchens, Midday Meal Workers Unions of CITU and AITUC jointly resorted to 2 days relay hunger strike during 20-21 September followed by *Chalo Vijayawada* programme on 22 September joined by 4,990 Mid Day Meal workers from 220 mandals of 12 districts. In the public meeting, all trade unions extended support.

To make this programme successful, 12 CITU district committees distributed 54,000 pamphlets and 10,000 posters. 183 mandal level meetings were also held.

Village Revenue Assistants Agitation

Demanding increase in their wages to Rs.10,500 at par with Telangana government, 6,000 Village Revenue Assistants joined in dharna in front of the collectorates in all the districts on 3 July. 15,000 pamphlets were distributed.

Relay hunger strike was held from 24 August to 5 September in Vijayawada joined by workers from 13 districts; followed by *Chalo Vijayawada* programme on 5 September 3,000 workers joining the procession and public meeting. A message was received from the government that increase of their wage to Rs.10,000 was being considered.

Contract and Outsourced Workers Dharna

Reminding election promise of TDP, 1340 contract and outsourced government employees staged dharna in 13 districts in front the collectorates on 11 July demanding regularization of their jobs, 180 days maternity leave with wages and equal pay for equal work as per the Supreme Court Judgment. 16,000 pamphlets were distributed.

Private Transport Workers Dharna: Private transport workers staged dharna at 7 centres in 5 districts protesting against petrol and diesel price hike. A state workshop was held on 9 August on membership, fund collection, Motor Vehicles Amendment Act and on functioning of the committees.

RTC Hired Bus Workers: A State convention of hired RTC bus workers was held at Vijayawada on 18 September participated by 145 workers from 9 districts. A state committee was formed and memorandum was submitted to the officials.

Residential Areas Workers: Survey and campaign were conducted in Vijayawada city among residential areas workers distributing 29,150 pamphlets, collecting thousands of signatures and staging local dharnas at 36 places in September which was concluded with staging dharna and submitting demands at tahsildar's office by 1569 workers on 20 September.

CPS Employees: 15,000 state government employees and teachers coming under contributory pension scheme held a 'Millennium March' in Vijayawada on 1 September. CITU have expressed solidarity and support by distributing 15,000 pamphlets and displaying banners.

Pensioners: Demanding payment of higher pension, a dharna was staged on 30 August in front of 6 PF offices by 1200 pensioners. All Pensioners and Retired Pensioners Association (APRPA) held its conference

at Visakhapatnam on 18 September which was inaugurated by CITU national vice president A. K. Padmanabhan.

CITU Union Winning Election: CITU union has won ITC's Agri business division – ILTD - workers election in the state with a majority of 359 votes.

Workshop on Sexual harassment: A state level workshop on sexual harassment was held in Vijayawada joined by 44 leading functionaries including 24 women. CITU national president K Hemalata attended and guided.

CITU State Extended General Council Meeting: An extended CITU state general council meeting was held at Kadapa on 11-12 October specifically to discuss on the campaign in the state on the issues of 9-11 November Delhi Mahapadav. CITU president Hemalata inaugurated the meeting. The meeting decided on holding district, city and mandal level conventions and general body meetings; publication of separate pamphlets on joint demands of trade unions and on CITU's additional demands; talking points of CITU centre to leaders and cadres at all levels. 30,000 copies of translated booklet on social security code were distributed and booklet on wages code and industrial relation code were translated and sent to districts. More than 2000 participants already reserved their tickets for Delhi Mahapadav. The number is expected to reach to 3000.

Solidarity Actions: (i) Flood Relief – Rs.25,000 was sent to Assam flood relief fund. **(ii) Strike**

by Fraternal Unions: Statewide solidarity pamphlets were distributed in support of 27 July BSNL strike and 22 August bank employees strike. **(iii) Dalits Movement** – In solidarity with the Dalits fighting against upper castes oppression through social boycott in a village in Godavari district, CITU state president led a 4 member's team visiting the village on 24 July and contributing financial and material support including 1050 kg of onion and 350 kg of pulses. The team also visited another village in Prakasam district in solidarity with the Dalits who are fighting against eviction from land which was being cultivated by them for decades. **(iv)**

Cuba Solidarity Day – was observed on 27 July by holding workers conventions in 6 cities including at Vijayawada. **(v) Agricultural Workers Conference:** CITU Kurnool district committee extended support in fund collection for holding agricultural workers union's state conference in Kurnool. 6,500 CITU workers joined the huge procession and the public meeting held on this occasion.

Organisational Classes: (i) CITU state and district committees held classes joined by 10,882 functionaries and activists during July–September. (ii) Anganwadi union organized 3 days class on 9–11 August attended by 70 functionaries from 5 districts. (ii) A 2 days state level class was held for the 40 contract and sourced employees' union functionaries on 12–13 August.

Tamilnadu

Agitations

For Delhi Mahapadav: Trade union coordination committees were formed and conventions were held in the first week of October in North Chennai, Chennai South, Tirupur, Kanyakumari, Virudhunagar, Dindigul, Theni as part of campaign and mobilisation for 9-11 November Delhi Mahapadav.

Protest against Neet Exam: Anitha of Ariyalur killed herself for not getting a seat medical education despite scoring 1190 marks out of 1200. CITU, AITUC, AICCTU, AIUTUC jointly staged demonstrations in Thanjavur, Vellore, Tirunelveli and Coimbatore on 3 October and in Chennai on 5 October demanding withdrawal of discriminatory NEET examination.

CITU collected fund and a delegation met the parents of Anitha on 12 October and handed over the cheque for the total collected amount of Rs.1.5 lakh.

Statewide Agitation on Demands: In continuation with 4 April massive rally in Chennai (*Working Class; May, 2017*) pursuing 13 point demands - against price rise and cut in PDS, to save distressed

farmers and agricultural workers and for compensation to hunger deaths, Rs.18000 as minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, demands for scheme workers, proper functioning of welfare boards etc, - CITU staged demonstration in all district headquarters on 25 September.

400 workers participated in the rally in Salem and memorandum was submitted; unorganized sector workers like tailors and road transport workers joined rally in large number in Coimbatore staging demonstration before the labour office; demonstrations were staged in front of district collectors offices in South Chennai, Chennai North, Thiruvapur, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Tuticorin and Madurai joined by construction and other unorganised sector workers in large number; Virudhunagar district committee mobilized the workers in crisis ridden fire cracker industry and held demonstration in front of the collector's office.

Against Privatisation of Salem Steel plant: *Save Salem Steel Plant* committee brought out rally in the township on 14 September joined by more than 300 workers.

IT-ITES Employees Meeting: Responding to CITU's all India call, 50 IT employees attended a meeting of IT and ITes employees on 9 September and discussed the plight of the workers and on the need and importance of forming trade union. An organising committee was formed with 9 members. The committee will conduct regional meetings in the major districts like Coimbatore, Trichy, Salem and Madurai before November and form a union of IT & ITes employees in Tamilnadu in December.

Wage Agreements: Following prolonged struggle including and 4 days strike beginning on 14 May by the workers of all unions in state road transport corporation, Government had announced a proposal and agreed to pay the legitimate dues of the retired employees; but, failed to hold wage negotiations, as was agreed, till September forcing all unions giving ultimatum to government on going to indefinite strike. Government, thereafter, started wage negotiation and an interim relief of Rs.1200 per month was announced. CITU, LPF, HMS, AITUC and other unions have not signed the agreement.

In Apollo Tyres, the wage agreement was signed under the guidance of CITU with average increase of Rs .12,500 to Rs.18,000 per month for the workers.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

For Equal Pay, Complete Strike by Daily Rated Workers

Under the banner of Andaman Sarvajanic Nirman Vibhag Mazdoor Sangh (CITU); all 4000 daily rated



workers of all divisions of Andaman Public Works Department (APWD) went on a day's complete strike on 10 August throughout the union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands demanding implementation of GOI's order to pay 1/30th basic plus DA of permanent workers to the daily rated workers. Striking workers of Port Blair and South Andaman rural areas staged daylong dharna and demonstration in front of the APWD chief engineer's office in the capital city of Port Blair addressed by B. Chandrachoodan, president and M. Boominathan, general secretary of the union. Striking workers also staged dharna and demonstrations in front of the offices of the concerned executive engineers at Diglipur, Mayabunder, Rangat, Kadamtala, Neil Island,

Havelock, Little Andaman, Car Nicobar, Kamorta, Katchal and Campbell Bay.

Ultimately the Andaman & Nicobar Administration on 30 September agreed to pay 1/30th of pay plus DA at the relevant scale of the Government of India to the daily rated workers in various departments of PWD, forest, etc.

WORKERS – PEASANTS UNITY

Historic ‘Kisan-Mazdoor’ Rally in Haryana

It was a historic rally and public meeting in the Hisar city of Haryana on 3 October, 2017 heralding the beginning of the 34th national conference of All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS). It was named as ‘Kisan–Mazdoor Rally’ signifying the relevance of workers-peasants unity in defending the rights and livelihood of the peasants and workers which are under serious attack by BJP governments at the Centre and in the State. The peasants and workers, coming across the State almost in equal number in thousands walking side by side, raised issues and demands of the peasants and workers. The chief minister of Tripura Manik Sarkar addressed the rally and public meeting as its main speaker. It was also addressed by CITU national president K. Hemalata.

CITU Haryana state committee in its June meeting had decided to actively participate in the preparation for the all India conference of AIKS. When the proposal came for making it a joint Kisan–Mazdoor rally, CITU state committee organised a state level general meeting of all level leading functionaries attended by 181 members of CITU state and district committees and committee members of all state level unions. Recalling CITU’s 15th conference report and resolution on workers-peasants unity and noting the importance of AIKS conference in advancing the democratic movement in the State and in the country, the meeting gave call to the workers of the State to express solidarity and support for the success of AIKS conference and to make the rally a historic one by their participation. CITU functionaries became part of the reception committee in the State and in districts and participated in the joint campaign among the peasants and workers. This helped in forging grass root unity, mutual confidence and in fund and material collection for the conference from different sections of the people. From several places the peasants and workers traveled together to join the rally.

It is worth mentioning that last two weeks in August the State’s normal life was seriously disturbed due to the Ram Rahim Dera episode; curfews were imposed in most of the districts. This was also the peak season of harvesting and the peasants were deeply engaged in it. Despite these hurdles, the rally and the conference were hugely successful.

This experience of peasants-workers unity will be immensely helpful in building militant struggles of the people in future in the State.

- Jai Bhagawan

Journalists on Amit Shah’s Son’s Business

In the background of defamation suit by BJP president Amit Shah’s son Jay Shah against ‘*The Wire*’ website, a seminar organized by the Delhi Union of Journalists in association with National Alliance of the Journalists in New Delhi on 15 October condemned the slapping of defamation suits in general targeting the journalists and news agencies. The use of defamation suits and prosecutions when they seek to protect those in power is undemocratic particularly when these are used against the media not only to intimidate but also to prevent the people from access to information, the resolution said.

The resolution demanded to know which statement in the report by *The Wire* was false. The Union government has asserted the legitimacy of the Jay Shah’s business, and therefore, it is for the Government to tell the people what part of the story is false and why it is false.

“If information on the affairs of close relatives of powerful politicians is to be withheld by the media, the only result will be the secrecy of power that will spawn all manner of corruption. If State power is used to maintain defamation suits and prosecutions in order to shroud the affairs of public persons and their close relatives, instead of coming out with the truth in the public domain, it is not only an assault on the press but a direct assault of constitutional democracy itself,” the resolution noted.

INTERNATIONAL

WFTU–TUIs Meeting in Kolkata

The annual consultative meeting of the TUIs (Trade Union Internationals) of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) was held in Kolkata on 9-10 October 2017. This annual meetings, which are being held in WFTU headquarters in Athens, was held outside for the first time. George Mavrikos, general secretary of WFTU, Swadesh Dev Roye, deputy general secretary of WFTU and international general coordinator of TUIs, and also national secretary of CITU, H Mahadevan, deputy general secretary of WFTU and its in-charge of Asia Pacific region attended this meeting. Leaders of 9 out of the total 10 TUIs from all over the world participated. The leadership of the central trade unions of India affiliated to WFTU also participated in the meeting and greeted the delegates.

Hemalata, president of CITU welcomed the gathering. The key note address was delivered by George Mavrikos. Swadesh Dev Roye presented the background paper explaining the role of the TUIs in strengthening class oriented trade union movement at the global level and the need to develop effective functioning and better coordination among the different national unions affiliated to the various TUIs. Mahadevan made an intervention explaining the status and functioning of the TUIs as per the WFTU constitution.

48 delegates participated in the discussion that followed. While supporting the formulations made in the speeches by the WFTU general secretary and the TUI in charge, they spoke on the conditions of workers in their sectors. They welcomed the CITU's initiative to organise the two day meeting which enabled detailed discussions on the issues.

Mavrikos concluded the discussion and emphasised the need for ideological development of the workers exposing the barbaric nature of imperialism and capitalism. He reiterated the need to pay attention to organise the migrants and address the issues of the refugees.

The meeting unanimously adopted the 'KOLKATA (INDIA) CONCLUSIONS', introduced by Dev Roye, which outlined the tasks to be undertaken in the next year.

The meeting was jointly hosted by different federations in India which constitute part of the TUIs – All India Coal Workers' Federation, All India Road Transport Workers' Federation, Water Transport Workers' Federation of India, Steel Workers' Federation of India, Construction Workers' Federation of India, Electricity Employees' Federation of India, Petroleum and Gas Workers' Federation of India, All India Insurance Employees' Association, Bank Employees' Federation of India, Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers, All India State Government Employees' Federation and BSNL Employees' Union.

A well attended trade union activists meeting was held in the University Institute Hall in the evening of 10 October which was addressed by George Mavrikos and Tapan Sen, general secretary of CITU. Swadesh Dev Roye presided over the meeting and Pradip Biswas, general secretary of BEFI presented the vote of thanks.

KOLKATA (INDIA) CONCLUSION

This WFTU – TUI annual consultation meeting is being held around one year after the 17th World Trade Union Congress in Durban, South Africa and around five months after the meeting of the Presidential Council of WFTU in Havana, Cuba. It is being held in a situation when the systemic capitalist crisis is deepening and the capitalist class continues its attempt to protect and increase their profits by shifting the burdens of the crisis on to the working class and other sections of the toiling people. All the hard won rights and benefits of the working class are under attack.

This onslaught has to be fought nationally and internationally. TUIs have a big responsibility in leading this fight. They have to develop and strengthen sectoral and coordinated movements in their respective sectors throughout the world under the guidance and with the support of the WFTU.

The ideology of the WFTU, the understanding of the 17th Congress of the WFTU about the world situation and the role of the class oriented trade unions have to be taken to the grass root level workers in our respective sectors.

TUIs are major bodies of class oriented trade union movement. They have the fundamental responsibility of defending the rights of the workers in their respective sectors including the trade union rights, of linking the workplace with the WFTU.

The basic principle of functioning enunciated by WFTU, of 'open and democratic functioning' should be duly reflected in the functioning of all our TUIs. Hence, whatever shortcomings in the functioning of the TUIs exist today have to be overcome with a sense of urgency.

To ensure this, we have to take up the following tasks:

- **All TUIs to meet regularly, discuss the developments in their industries, the conditions of the workers in their industries and their struggles in various countries at the global level. Mechanism for regular sharing of information among all affiliated unions across the globe to be evolved and effectively implemented.**
- **Support the struggles of workers in their industries across the world, plan solidarity actions and implement them; inform WFTU Secretariat about these struggles for broader support and solidarity**
- **Plan activities that would help ideological development of the working class in their respective sectors**
- **Review implementation of decisions and progress in all meetings and formulate activities accordingly**
- **Strengthen coordination among the various affiliated unions of the TUIs and between the TUIs and the WFTU to develop effective global resistance to the global onslaught of the capitalists**
- **The 150th year of publication of 'Das Capital' to be observed to spread awareness about the inherent exploitative nature of the capitalist system and raise the consciousness of the workers on the need to change the system and the role of the working class in ending exploitation.**
- **TUI affiliates are to take up the day to day problems of workers, analyse objectively from working class angle the cause of problems and organise struggle to fulfil the demands of the workers.**
- **TUIs to work for developing unity with the farmers, students and self employed people.**
- **TUIs have the task of promoting international solidarity with workers from other sectors and countries.**
- **TUIs must pay attention to the diabolical developments of political refugees and economic migrants facing inhuman atrocities internationally which is directly linked to barbarity of imperialism and capitalist crisis.**
- **TUIs must act as powerful lever of struggle against capitalist barbarism pursued by monstrous multi-national corporations (MNCs).**
- **To take precise efforts to improve the functional position of the TUIs, with specific attention to strengthen the fund position of the TUIs in order to expand their function and activities.**
- **To undertake study at regular intervals to trace down the development in industries with facts and figures with a view to educate the cadres and masses internationally and send the reports to WFTU Secretariat.**
- **To establish co-ordination between the Regional Offices and TUIs in each Regions, so as to help each other and the implementation of collective programmes.**
- **TUIs must continuously promote the WFTU amongst the grass root level workers and unions and bring them into the WFTU family. This should be an important parameter to judge the organisational success of all the TUIs.**
- **TUIs must participate in the activities of the different forums of WFTU and implement the campaign and action programmes time to time decided by the WFTU including observation of the Action Day on 3rd October every year**
- **TUIs must democratically elect leaders in their Congress ensuring that the new cadres and leaders are active and effective in discharging the responsibility of the office they hold in the respective TUI.**

This meeting held at Kolkata, India on 9-10 October 2017 with representatives from the Nine TUIs requests the WFTU Secretariat to concretise the various proposals and action programmes planned by the TUIs. The Secretariat of WFTU may ensure communication to the TUIs regularly and extend class oriented ideological and organisational support to all the TUIs.

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

State	Centre	July 2017	Aug 2017	State	Centre	July 2017	Aug 2017
AP	GUNTUR	276	279	MHR	MUMBAI	293	294
	VIJAYWADA	280	278		NAGPUR	318	318
	VISHAKHAPATHNAM	280	285		NASIK	293	294
ASM	DOOM DOOMA TINSUKIA	259	262		PUNE	276	277
	GUWAHATI	247	249		SHOLAPUR	296	296
	LABAC SILCHAR	259	262	ORI	ANGUL TALCHER	298	300
	MARIANI JORHAT	243	245		ROURKELA	296	304
	RANGAPARA TEZPUR	239	243	PUD	PUDUCHERRY	301	298
BIH	MUNGER JAMALPUR	297	300	PUN	AMRITSAR	285	287
CHD	CHANDIGARH	279	284		JALANDHAR	279	287
CHS	BHILAI	311	312		LUDHIANA	276	277
DLI	DELHI	263	264	RJN	AJMER	263	265
GOA	GOA	297	297		BHILWARA	279	279
GUJ	AHMEDABAD	274	274		JAIPUR	274	275
	BHAVNAGAR	269	270	TN	CHENNAI	266	263
	RAJKOT	272	272		COIMBATORE	270	271
	SURAT	263	262		COONOR	287	281
	VADODARA	261	262		MADURAI	284	282
HRY	FARIDABAD	262	263		SALEM	274	274
	YAMUNANAGAR	275	277		TIRUCHIRAPALLY	291	289
HP	HIMACHAL PRADESH	257	259	TEL	GODAVARIKHANI	296	295
J&K	SRINAGAR	263	262		HYDERABAD	250	249
JRK	BOKARO	278	280		WARRANGAL	291	289
	GIRIDIH	306	306	TRP	TRIPURA	254	257
	JAMSHEDPUR	337	335	UP	AGRA	308	312
	JHARIA	307	308		GHAZIABAD	278	280
	KODARMA	326	326		KANPUR	291	293
	RANCHI HATIA	323	325		LUCKNOW	285	281
KNT	BELGAUM	291	292		VARANASI	286	286
	BENGLURU	291	291	WB	ASANSOL	307	306
	HUBLI DHARWAR	301	305		DARJEELING	256	256
	MERCARA	301	303		DURGAPUR	308	308
	MYSORE	299	299		HALDIA	314	315
KRL	ERNAKULAM	294	292		HOWRAH	270	272
	MUNDAKKAYAM	302	299		JALPAIGURI	268	279
	QUILON	326	327		KOLKATA	269	270
MP	BHOPAL	279	282		RANIGANJ	255	257
	CHHINDWARA	287	293		SILIGURI	261	264
	INDORE	261	261				
	JABALPUR	281	281				
ALL INDIA INDEX						285	285

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Joint Trade Union Conventions in States

(Report Page 10)



Madhya Pradesh



Rajasthan



Punjab

3 Days Strike in Madhya Pradesh Anganwadi Employees

(Report Page 18)



Jabalpur



Dindori

WFTU – TUIs ANNUAL MEETING IN KOLKATA

(Report page 24)



The Meeting in Session



WFTU General Secretary George Mavrikos & CITU General Secretary Tapan Sen addressing the Workers Meet on that Occasion



A Section in the Workers Meet