



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

5 September 2018 : Before the Parliament

Historic Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh



Addressing the Rally

(Top) - **CITU General Secretary Tapan Sen**

(Below) - **AIKS General Secretary Hannan Mollah**

Munshi Prem Chand

31 July 2018 was 136th Birthday Anniversary of Munshi Premchand,
The Doyen of Indian Literature



“ लोग कहते हैं आंदोलन, प्रदर्शन
और जुलूस निकालने से क्या होता
है...? इससे यह सिद्ध होता है कि
हम जीवित हैं, अटल हैं और मैदान
से हटे नहीं हैं। हमें अपने हार न
मानने वाले स्वाभिमान का प्रमाण
देना था। हमें यह दिखाना है कि हम
गोलियों और अत्याचारों से भयभीत
होकर अपने लक्ष्य से हटने वाले नहीं
और हम उस व्यवस्था का अंत
करके रहेंगे, जिसका आधार
स्वार्थीपन और खून पर है। ”
प्रेम चंद

“People say, what purpose is served
by agitation, demonstration and
bringing out processions...? It proves
that we are alive, firm and not leaving
the ground. We had to give prove of
our self-pride of not giving up. We
have to demonstrate that we are not
leaving our objective being afraid of
bullets and oppressions and we shall
end that system which is based on
selfishness and blood.

- Prem Chand.”

(Inputs: Prasanta Nandi Choudhury)

Protest against Fascistic Attack On Human Rights & Civil Liberties



CITU strongly condemned the raids on and arrests of the dalits and human rights activists on 28 August in different parts of the country invoking draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) by Maharashtra government and central agencies. It is a blatant attempt to silence the dissent which is integral part of any democratic political system, CITU said in a statement on 29 August.

As a major constituent, it joined the immediate protest rally of Jan Ekta Jan Adhikar Aandolan (JEJAA) at Parliament Street in New Delhi on 30 August against this fascistic attack and authoritarian onslaught. All CITU office bearers at its Centre including the general secretary participated.



WORKING CLASS

SEPTEMBER 2018

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Editorial

Prepare for the Final Push To Topple the Repressive Regime

There are three prong attacks on all toiling sections of the people - of aggressive neoliberalism; of fascistic and divisive pursuit; and of anti-democratic repression of civil liberties and human rights - by the authoritarianism regime under BJP government at the Centre and the States. Added to this is the increasing imperialist collaboration and penetration in our economic and social life.

Facing such multi-prong attacks, the democratic movement in India has also lifted itself in a higher plane entering into a new stage with multi-facet dimensions – the basic classes of workers, peasants and agricultural workers nationwide are coming together in united actions; the working class unitedly heightening its movement through joint sectoral and general actions including strikes by central trade unions and federations; and the broader democratic issues being raised unitedly by the platform of more than a hundred class, mass and social organisations.

In the year 2018, CITU, AIKS and AIAWU jointly observed 19 January as commemoration day of the martyrs in the India's first general strike in 1982; countrywide *Jail Bharo* on 9 August and huge all India Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally in front of the Parliament on 5 September. AIDWA held women's rally before the Parliament on 4 September.

10 central trade unions and industrial federations, after massive 3 days Mahapadav on 9-11 November in New Delhi, organised successfully district level Satyagraha movement by last week of January; united strike in Kerala and protest all over India against 'fixed term employment' on 2 April; and decided to hold national convention of the workers on 28 September in New Delhi mainly to decide on 2 days workers general strike in the end quarter of the year. Kisan organisations are jointly organising 100 kms Long March to New Delhi on 28-30 November. DYFI is organising youth protest march on 3 November.

The united platform of class, mass and social organisations in JEJAA successfully organised district and lower level unity rallies on 23 May; staged protests against killing of Gauri Lankesh and arrests of civil and human rights activists.

The repressive regime and protesting people are standing face to face. Of course there are continued sufferings due to continued attacks on the people's lives and livelihood; but there is also increasing people's militant opposition and growing push. These will lead to final push in the coming States Assembly and next year's Parliamentary election to remove the oppressive regimes; and continue the push, thereafter, for policy changes for the people towards a New India.

An Appeal by Intellectuals and Eminent Persons

Make 5 September Mazdoor-Kisan Rally Successful

The September 5 rally of workers, peasants and agricultural labourers would be an unprecedented event in the nation's history. Until now there have been separate rallies of workers or of peasants or of agricultural labourers in the country, but never a joint rally of all these classes, certainly not on this scale in the capital city. This would be the first such effort.

The coming together of these classes is not just an important political project. Their economic destinies have got closely linked under neo-liberalism. The agrarian crisis unleashed by neo-liberalism through the withdrawal of State support from peasant agriculture, which has already claimed more than three lakh lives over the last two decades through a spate of suicides, has also driven numerous people from the countryside to search for jobs in the urban areas. Such jobs being non-existent, they have swollen the ranks of unemployed and underemployed workers and thereby contributed unwittingly to a worsening of the real wages and conditions of work of all segments of urban workers including even those who are said to belong to the organized and unionized segment.

An alliance of all these classes who are the joint victims of neo-liberalism is the primary instrument for overcoming the neo-liberal order. It is also therefore the primary instrument for overcoming the conjuncture which sustains the forces of communal-authoritarianism that currently rule the country. This alliance is the means for the ultimate defeat of this sinister trend.

For turning this alliance, for which neo-liberalism has created an objective potential, into an alliance-for-itself which consciously begins to play the role of an agency for change, the September 5 rally is a significant step. We appeal to all who are interested in building an India free of exploitation and discrimination on caste, communal, and gender lines, to join this rally which marks a new beginning, and to support it in every possible way, including also by supporting the immediate demands of these classes that are listed in the attached document.

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Joint Call of - CITU - AIKS - AIAWU

Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally on 5th September 2018

CITU, AIKS and AIAWU have decided to organise a 'Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally' at Parliament on 5th September 2018. This is the first time that such a joint rally is being held at the national level.

Unite! Fight - • Against Pro corporate, Pro landlord governments; • Against Anti Labour, Anti Farmer, Anti National Policies; • For Policies that benefit All Toiling People;

The main demands - 1. Curb price rise; universalise Public Distribution System; ban forward trading in essential commodities; 2. Implement concrete measures for generation of decent employment; 3. Declare minimum wage of not less than Rs 18000 per month for all workers; 4. Retract anti-worker labour law amendments; 5. Ensure remunerative prices for the peasants as per Swaminathan Committee recommendations; and timely public procurement; 6. Implement debt waiver for poor peasants and agricultural workers; 7. Pass Comprehensive Central legislation for agricultural workers; 8. Implement MGNREGA in all rural areas and amend the Act to cover urban areas as well; 9. Ensure food security, health, education, housing for all; 10. Provide universal social security; 11. No contractorisation of employment and equal wages for equal work for men and women; 12. Implement Redistributive land reforms; 13. Stop forcible land acquisition; 14. Provide relief and rehabilitation for the victims of natural calamities; and 15. Reverse neoliberal policies.

Historic Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally

Before the Parliament; 5 September, 2018

Responding to the united call of CITU, AIKS and AIAWU; countrywide campaign; and following the 9 August united action of Jail Bharo; lakhs of workers, peasants and agricultural workers, men and women, poured in the national capital, New Delhi, from all parts of the country, from almost all states and union territories; despite rains, floods and huge sufferings; by all available transports; to join the historic Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally in front of the Parliament; and to submit a workers, peasants, agricultural workers, unemployed youths and the people's 15 point charter of demands for basic needs and rights; and also to give a clear message to Modi government of the gathering storm of people's anger which will rest only after uprooting this government of aggressive neoliberal policies with divisive agenda; and to carry future struggle for a New India for the People of India.

Men and women in huge numbers started reaching the main camp at Ramlila Ground and at several other camps since 3 September. They, with humility, had borne the discomfort in the rain drenched camps despite all possible attempts by the reception committee and volunteers to provide minimum requirements of stay. With patience they stood in the rains to line up for the procession to begin from Ramlila Ground. March from Ramlila Ground started with the national leaders of all three organisations in the front followed by the contingent of red shirt volunteers of all three organisations. The rally increased in numbers as contingents of NCR Delhi, neighbouring states and from Sahibabad camp marched in procession from eight other locations to join the main contingent.

As the March reached the police barricade at the Parliament Street, the procession converted into rally and mass meeting from 10 A.M. The rally gathering stretched from Parliament Street police station to inner circle of Connaught Place, spilling over to Jantar Mantar road and other connecting roads and lanes. Because of the procession and the rally, New Delhi's road transportation went out of gear for hours together and the arterial roads approaching the Parliament came to grinding halt.

The mass meeting was presided by the presidium consisting of the presidents of three organisations. Chairman of the reception committee Prof. Prabhat Patnaik and 10 national leaders from each of the three organisations were on the dais. The meeting was addressed by the presidents - K. Hemalata of CITU, Ashok Dhawale of AIKS and Thirunavakkarasu of AIAWU; general secretaries – Tapan Sen of CITU, Hannan Mollah of AIKS and A. Vijaya Raghavan of AIAWU; leaders of CITU affiliated and associated 17 federations; 12 other leaders of AIKS and 4 leaders of AIAWU; and the leader of School Teachers Federation of India. The concluding speech was delivered by Amra Ram of AIKS, Brijlal Bharati of AIAWU and Tapan Sen of CITU.

Despite inclement weather, the participants in the rally were not just mute spectators, raising slogans and enthusiastically responding to the speeches of the leaders highlighting their demands, other issues and exposing the anti-people and divisive policies of the government. The corporate media, this time, in their reports, noted with respect the response in the individual interviews of the ordinary workers, peasants and agricultural workers telling about their struggle emphasising on the demands and issues linking with their lives experience.

The rally resolved of taking solidarity actions by the three organisations to other's incoming movement including 100 kms 3 days Long March to New Delhi jointly by hundreds of Kisan organisations; proposed 2 days workers general strike unitedly by the central trade unions and federations and DYFI's youth rally in Delhi.

Call of the Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally

Carry Forward Workers Peasants Alliance in Action

Tapan Sen, General Secretary, CITU

THE historic and massive 'Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally' before Parliament on 5 September 2018, led by the CITU, AIKS and AIAWU; was preceded by series of country wide campaign, mobilisations and agitations. Now, the struggle against the anti-worker, anti-people and anti-national policies of the government at the Centre has entered a new phase with altogether a new dimension. The enthusiastic response that the call has received right from the preparatory phase itself to the massive participation of workers, peasants and agricultural workers in the 5 September rally from every part of the country, from extreme south to north, east and west, is itself an indication of the warm welcome accorded by the people to this new feature – organised resistance by the working class along with its main class ally, the agricultural workers and peasants against the neoliberal order.

This is for the first time in the history of the country's democratic movement that such joint worker peasant joint actions could be organised at district and even lower levels in several states, culminating in the massive national rally. Post independent India has witnessed, perhaps, the historically mandated initiative of building joint class resistance by the workers, agricultural workers and peasants, who are the real creators of national wealth, the principal contributors to the national exchequer both directly and indirectly, besides keeping the wheel of the national economy moving. If they stop working concertedly, everything will collapse –and that speaks about their central role in keeping the country moving. The assertion of the class alliance of the workers and peasants will help the entire toiling class realise and discover their inbuilt potential and strength to fight the crisis-ridden system of exploitation for complete transcendence of the system itself in favour of the toiling class.

This new dimension of workers-peasants alliance has to be strengthened and carried forward with a continuity -- that is the direction given to all of us by such huge spontaneous response by the massive rally of the toiling people of the country at the national capital.

EFFORTS to build joint campaigns and agitations have been going on for the last several years. CITU has taken the initiative for a joint campaign including the AIKS and AIAWU to 'Save ICDS', a comprehensive scheme for child development, from privatisation and ultimate dismantling. Efforts were made to involve the peasants and agricultural workers who were the beneficiaries of the scheme and the anganwadi employees who implement it at the grass root level. Similar efforts were made on the issue of the Electricity Bill.

Since the last three years, CITU, AIKS and AIAWU have been jointly observing 19th January every year, as workers-peasants martyrdom day, to commemorate the death in police firing, of 10 people including workers, agricultural workers and peasants, on the occasion of the first joint countrywide strike after Independence, on that day in 1982. The demands of this strike included the major demands of the peasants and agricultural workers – remunerative prices for the peasants and comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers.

Besides, the joint trade union movement extended active solidarity and support to the countrywide struggle by AIKS and other peasant organisations against the retrograde land acquisition ordinance followed by the related Bill by the BJP led Modi government. The joint trade union movement opposed that Ordinance and Bill in all its agitations and struggles. The strong opposition of the peasants with firm solidarity of the working class movement ultimately compelled the Modi government to allow the ordinance to lapse and to shelve the Bill, at least for the time being. The struggles of the peasantry on their other demands like minimum support price, loan waiver etc also received support and solidarity of the trade union movement.

The initiatives for such joint actions got a new momentum in the current year. The peasants' struggles facing police repression in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and their Long March from Nasik to Mumbai inspired workers across the country. The massive country wide general strikes and the unprecedented three day 'mahapadav' of the workers enthused peasants. CITU general council held in March 2018 welcomed the AIKS call for countrywide jail bhara on 9th August 2018 and decided to participate in the programme throughout the country shoulder to shoulder with the peasant-folk. AIKS and AIAWU welcomed the initiative of CITU to organise a massive March to Parliament on 5th September 2018 and agreed to join it, making it a Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally.

The enthusiasm generated by the joint call is reflected in the massive participation of more than five lakh peasants and workers in the jail bhara on 9 August 2018 in at least 540 locations in 393 districts across the country. It was also reflected in the night long 'samuhik jagaran' programme on the night of 14th August 2018, on the eve of Independence Day, which was observed in 395 locations covering all the states by over 62,000 workers and their families; peasants in many places joined the programme. In addition, the three organisations joined together in the campaign at the grass roots level in several states to expose the anti-people and anti-national policy regime.

These joint activities and campaigns demonstrate the commitment of the toiling people for countrywide united struggles against the neoliberal policies to safeguard their rights and living conditions. They hold the promise for developing militant joint struggles aimed at reversal of these policies and bringing in pro people policy regime. This has to be achieved through sustained efforts to continue the struggle and take it to new heights.

THE workers-peasants alliance's determination to carry on joint struggle with continuity, right from its preparatory phase itself started tempering the atmosphere of struggle countrywide, drawing organizations of other sections of the common populace, irrespective of affiliations in the battle line. Already the united platform of central trade unions and federations have been conducting several agitations including numerous strike actions against the neoliberal policy regime since decades and in that process the platform of unity got consistently widened to draw almost all central trade unions and federations in the country in the united platform of struggle. In that background, the workers peasants alliance initiative has added momentum to the urge for loud expression of unrest and anger among the mass of the populace drawing various segments of the society in the frontline of struggle against the grievous impact of the anti-people policies on their lives and livelihood.

The Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) decided to organise day long dharna at district headquarters all over the country before the offices of the central government establishments on 15th September 2018 followed by a big rally of around 50000 youth before Parliament on 3rd November 2018. These programmes will expose the employment killing policies of the government and its fraudulent campaign on employment generation.

The All India Kisan Sanjukta Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSSCC) comprising various farmers and agricultural workers' organisations in the country has decided to organise a 100 kilometre long March to Parliament from 7/8 locations in and around Delhi in which farmers and agricultural workers from all the parts of country will participate.

All the major central trade unions and almost all national independent federations of employees in services and establishments in state and central governments, defence-manufacturing, banks and insurance, telecom and workers of almost all strategic sectors of the economy viz., coal, steel, electricity, petroleum, engineering, port & dock, road transport, etc, both in public and private sector have jointly decided to go in for nationwide campaign at the workplace level against the destructive economic policies of the government at the centre and its nefarious design to impose slavery on the working people through pro-employer change in labour laws, which will culminate in a two days countrywide general strike by the end of the year. The National Convention of Workers to be held at Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi on 28th September 2018, will draw the details of the action programmes including country wide general strike. Besides above, many more sectoral struggles are in the offing.

WE are fighting against the neoliberal policies of an extreme right-reactionary government at the centre which is spearheading the worst onslaught on the lives and livelihood of the toiling people in every sector and segment of the economy. It is the most heinous political gang which is carrying on a poisonous campaign as a part of its governing strategy to cultivate communal and divisive polarisation to weaken and disrupt the unity of the people. We are fighting against a venomous as well as an authoritarian outfit, which, with the use of state machinery under its command, is seeking to curb the right to dissent and right of free expression which is inseparable ingredient of democracy. All these are integral to the singular strategy of the neoliberal capitalist order and its operator in the governance to sustain itself in the midst of deepening crisis in which it is engulfed.

Our struggle has to be directed comprehensively against the neoliberal capitalist order and the authoritarian as well as poisonous machinations on the society by their extreme right wing operators in the seat of governance. The workers-peasants alliance in this struggle will definitely widen the unity of the toiling class in entirety and cementing and broadening this alliance in every phase of struggle is the crucial task before us. This needs more proactive role of the class oriented trade union movement to assert and actively involve with solidarity action in every phase of the struggles and activities of the peasants' and agricultural workers' organisations, be it at local, state or national level. It is the prime responsibility of the working class movement to carry forward this alliance in action towards a more stable platform of action against neoliberal capitalist order and the politics of neoliberalism with a consistent continuity. Let the huge success of 9th August Jail Bharo and 5th September Mazdoor Kisan Sanghash Rally give us the confidence and arm us with the resolve to discharge that responsibility. Let the entire CITU be charged with that confidence.

WE SHALL OVERCOME

States

Telangana Electricity Contract Workers Successful Strike

Following trade unions united front, TETUF, led movement, on 5 December 2016, the chief minister publicly promised to regularise all 23,663 contract workers in the state power sector. CITU affiliated United Electricity Employees Union has been pursuing the cause of Artisans, the outsourced employees in power sector. However, an independent union gave notice for strike from 21 July on these contract workers demands. CITU union formed a Joint Action Committee (JAC) and joined the strike on 24 August after staging a huge 'seize Vidyut Soudha' programme joined by more than 3,500 electricity workers.

On JAC joining the strike, the government and the management came under pressure. The power minister and the management of Transmission Corporation Of Telangana Ltd (TSTRANSCO) had hurried consultation with all five recognised unions, including 4 non-striking unions, and on the very same day on 28 July issued implementation order on wage increase of the contract workers designated as Artisans; and the recognised striking and non-striking unions called off the strike. JAC also called off the strike and notified further intensified movement from 31 July. The C&MD of TSTRANSCO and government's special chief secretary on 30 July in writing urged the JAC to desist from the proposed movement forwarding the copy of implementation order and informing that JAC's demands were considered.

In the implementation order the management agreed to immediately file additional counter affidavit in the high court petitioning for vacating the stay on absorption of contract workers as regular employees; increased total remuneration, inclusive of enhanced consolidated wage and 'special allowance', as on 1 August 2018 to Rs.19,548 for Grade IV, Rs. 21,719 for Grade III, Rs. 25,042 for Grade II and Rs.29,743 for Grade I Artisans; employers contribution of EPF and ESI will be additional benefits; job to one kin of the deceased employee; Grade IV and Grade III Artisans doing specified skilled work will be paid Grade II remuneration; medical credit card for accident on duty; etc. Some other demands will be examined. (*Inputs: Sudhabhaskar Rupanagunta*)

9 August Kisan-Mazdoor 'Jail Bharo'

Significant in Many Ways

K. Hemalata, President, CITU

For the first time in decades, the two major sections of toiling masses that create the wealth of our country, workers and peasants, have joined in militant actions against the government policies. The call to court arrest, given by All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) was supported by Centre of Indian Trade Unions, which called upon the workers to actively participate in the programme.

As per the initial reports received by the CITU centre, the programme was held in 539 places in 393 districts in 22 states. A total of 4,43,417 people comprising of basic classes of peasants, workers and agricultural workers with some others courted arrest. Out of this, 2,08,103, nearly 47%, were workers. The participation of workers in such huge numbers, in support of the demands of peasants, is encouraging. In fact, in 10 out of the 22 states – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Telangana – the participation of workers has been reported to be well over 60% while in three more states – Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka workers comprised around half or more of the total participants. In Kerala, Rajasthan and West Bengal the participation of workers was between 30% and 40%. However, in 3 states - Tripura, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, the participation of workers was poor, below 30%. Tens of thousands of people were arrested. In many places police did not have the necessary machinery to arrest all of those who offered to be arrested.

The huge and militant participation of peasants and workers in West Bengal and Tripura braving the intimidation, threats and physical attacks by the ruling parties in their states, the TMC and BJP respectively, inspired the people all over the country. The police in these states used tear gas, water cannons, lathi charge etc against the participants. In West Bengal, some of those arrested were not released even by the evening of the second day. The heroic participation peasants and workers in the 'jail bharo' in these two states created confidence among people across the country that by continuing and further strengthening such struggles the Left in these states would be able to regain the lost ground and again emerge as the leading force, which in turn will boost the countrywide struggle against the neoliberal regime.

Participation of women workers in large numbers in many parts of the country, in support of the peasants' demands was another significant feature. In several districts, they not just participated but took the initiative in organising the demonstrations and led the court arrest programme. Though district wise details of the participation of different sections of workers in the programme are awaited, even in states like Gujarat where the CITU is weak, in three districts, where no other CITU affiliated union existed nor the kisan sabha, it was the anganwadi employees and ASHAs under the banners of their unions, who held demonstrations and courted arrest. In Punjab anganwadi employees led the demonstrations and courted arrest in many districts.

There was visible enthusiasm among the workers which was reflected in the huge participation in the 9 August court arrest programme and its spread in over half of the districts in the country. This indicates the potential to further expand and strengthen joint campaigns and struggles of the workers and peasants leading to the establishment of worker peasant alliance. Such an alliance alone can decisively defeat the neoliberal onslaught on the working people of our country.

The need to develop wider joint struggles, not only of the workers, but also of workers and peasants, to launch offensive struggles against neoliberal policies aimed at their reversal, was being emphasised by CITU since many years. Extending support and solidarity to the demands

and struggles of the peasantry and other sections of exploited and oppressed sections of people was seen as a measure towards developing the political consciousness of workers. Efforts were made to develop joint campaigns during the last three years. CITU, AIKS and All India Agricultural Workers' Union (AIAWU) have been giving joint calls to observe 19 January together on certain common demands. The 9 August court arrest programme has taken such joint actions to a higher level and opened up opportunities to expand and consolidate joint struggles.

The success of the 'jail bhara' programme reflects the growing discontent and anger of the toiling people against the impact of the neoliberal policies being aggressively pursued by the BJP led Modi regime. What needs to be done at this juncture is to channelise this discontent and anger into higher forms of struggles against the neoliberal regime. Peasants and workers have to be made conscious about the link between their day to day issues and the neoliberal regime being pursued by the ruling classes and about alternative policies. Unless their class consciousness is raised, the ruling classes would try to mislead them and divert their attention from their real day to day problems to non issues like beef eating, cow protection, love jihad etc. As elections approach, the RSS and its outfits including the BJP will desperately use all tricks in their hands and all resources at their disposal to divert the discourse among the people from the failure of their policies towards communal and divisive issues. They will use all methods to disrupt unity of the people and polarise society on communal and caste lines. The fight on the day to day and livelihood issues of peasants and workers, against the neoliberal regime has to be combined with the fight against the divisive and disruptive agenda of the communal and casteist forces of all hues and colours, particularly the RSS, which yields greater and wider influence with the BJP in power at the centre and in many states. All efforts have to be made to protect peoples' unity.

CITU made efforts during this period to create awareness among the workers about how the ruling classes, in our country as well as globally, try to promote right wing forces to disrupt the unity of the people and weaken their struggles against the neoliberal policies. It has also tried to create awareness among the working class about the conditions of the peasantry and how the poor and marginal peasants and agricultural workers suffered due to the neoliberal regime being pursued by successive governments since the last more than 25 years. The campaign material prepared by CITU centre included 'talking points' on minimum support price, agricultural workers and migration due to rural distress, aimed at educating union activists. However, some more material related to agrarian crisis and rural distress could not be prepared as envisaged.

The decision to combine the exercise to revamp the organisation with the initiatives for the campaign culminating in the mobilisation on 5th September 2018, taken by the CITU general council that met in Kozhikode in March, has proved to be effective. The CITU general council has decided to organise state level workshops in all states followed by district and state union level workshops and meetings of the lowest level committees of all CITU affiliated unions to discuss both. These were aimed to improve the democratic functioning of the organisation, to put into practice the decision to 'reach the unreached' and 'link up issues with policies and expose the politics behind the policies'. State level workshops were held in all states except in Jammu and Kashmir because of the prevailing serious situation. It had to be deferred in Kerala due to some unavoidable reasons and will now be held in the second part of September. In some states district level and state union level workshops have also been completed. The importance of 9th August 'jail bhara' programme was explained in all these workshops. Thus, the organisational preparations and initiatives at the lower levels have also resulted in the large participation of the workers.

CITU's experience shows that sustained efforts to activate members at all levels of the organisation by improving democratic functioning, and to raise their political consciousness to enable largest sections of toiling people understand the need to defeat the neoliberal policies are essential for realising the potential that exists today to defeat the neoliberal regime. There cannot be any shortcuts to defeating the anti worker, anti peasant, anti people and anti national regime governing the country today.

Unprecedented Nationwide Jail Bharo Struggle

Ashok Dhawale, President, AIKS

It was by far the most massive nationwide Jail Bharo struggle in recent times. According to preliminary reports received from the states, well over five lakh peasants and workers courted arrest at over 610 centres in 407 districts in 23 states across the country on August 9, 2018. They raised the central slogan “Modi Sarkar, Chale Jaao!”

This was in recognition of the fact that the BJP-RSS government headed by Narendra Modi is without doubt the most anti-peasant, anti-worker and anti-people regime in the last 71 years of Independent India. It is also the most pro-corporate, communal and casteist.

This Jail Bharo struggle of peasants, workers and agricultural labourers was led jointly by the AIKS, CITU and AIAWU. Overall, the peasants led by AIKS were around three lakh and the workers led by CITU were around two lakh. The AIAWU also mobilised in a few states. Intensive and extensive preparations for the success of this action were made in all states.

It was an important step forward towards building worker-peasant unity in action – a step that will be further cemented by the September 5 Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally in Delhi. Women, youth and students led by AIDWA, DYFI and SFI also participated in large numbers. Lakhs of signatures in each state on peasant demands of the AIKS addressed to the Prime Minister were submitted to the district authorities.

The August 9 Jail Bharo stir made a great impact on the people at large. Both print and electronic media, as well as social media, covered the struggle well at the regional level. This action helped to take forward the joint resistance of the peasantry and the working class.

Statewise Picture

The largest and most militant mobilisation in this struggle was in West Bengal, where over 1,42,000 people participated in all the districts of the state. In several places, thousands of protestors broke through many barricades set up by the thoroughly authoritarian TMC government. Under the leadership of former AIKS Joint Secretary Suryakant Mishra and many others, they braved the repressive wrath of the police, but refused to bend. They castigated the anti-people policies of both the Modi regime as well as the Mamata regime.

Another valiant struggle took place in Tripura, where the Left is facing massive repression from the barbaric regime led by the BJP-RSS-IPFT. In this tiny state, over 11,000 people took part in the Jail Bharo stir. Under the leadership of former Chief Minister Manik Sarkar and many others, they braved lathi charges, and even water cannons and tear gas,.

Kerala faced a different kind of adversary – nature itself! August 9 was the day of unprecedented rains which eventually led to the catastrophic floods in Kerala. Triumphant over even that, more than 30,000 people took part in the Jail Bharo stir. Had it not been for the torrential rains, the figure would have easily reached a couple of lakhs.

Tamil Nadu faced a completely different problem – the death of former chief minister M Karunanidhi. Due to the mourning period, the Jail Bharo had to be cancelled. The state had planned for over one lakh arrests that day.

Among the other states, Maharashtra had the largest participation of 63,437 at 66 centres in 27 districts. Here the mobilisation would have crossed the target of one lakh, had it not been for the state bandh call on the issue of Maratha caste reservations the very same day. The next largest was Bihar, where over 50,000 people participated at 35 district centres.

The mobilisation figures for the other states were as follows: Assam – 35,000, Punjab – 35,000, Rajasthan – 28,000, Karnataka – 27,756, Uttar Pradesh – 25,000, Odisha – 23,500, Andhra Pradesh – 13,000, Telangana – 12,336, Himachal Pradesh – 11,000, Haryana – 11,000, Jharkhand

– 8,496, Madhya Pradesh – 5,250, Chhattisgarh – 3,370, Gujarat – 3,174, Uttarakhand – 2,000, Jammu & Kashmir – 1,900, Delhi – 50, Manipur – 50.

Concept and Preparations for Jail Bharo

The AIKS Central Kisan Committee (CKC) meeting held on March 18-19, 2018 at Delhi, decided to launch a massive campaign on burning peasant demands and collect 10 crore signatures from the people to culminate in a massive Jail Bharo struggle at the district level across the country on August 9, 2018. August 9, 1942 is a historic date in our freedom struggle, the day on which Mahatma Gandhi served notice on the British imperialist government to 'Quit India'.

The main demands decided by the AIKS were land rights, opposition to forced land acquisition, implementation of Forest Rights Act (FRA), farm loan waiver, remunerative prices as per the Swaminathan Commission formula $C2 + 50\%$, increased pension for agricultural workers and poor farmers and a comprehensive crop insurance scheme.

The General Council meeting of the CITU held at Kozhikode, Kerala on March 24-26, 2018 decided to participate in the Jail Bharo struggle on August 9 in solidarity with the peasantry. The CITU proposed that this be followed by the first-ever Worker-Peasant Struggle Rally since Independence on September 5, 2018 at Delhi. The AIKS and AIAWU fully supported this proposal. It has thus become a joint rally of all three class organisations.

The All India Kisan Council (AIKC) meeting of the AIKS held at Rajapalayam in Tamil Nadu on July 18-20, 2018, reviewed the preparations for the Jail Bharo and the Delhi Rally and gave a clarion call to make both these struggles a great success. It also decided to mobilise Rs 5 crore as Kisan Sangharsh Fund, mainly through mass collection of Rs 10 each from village households and petty traders throughout the country.

Meetings and consultations were held among the office bearers of the three organisations. A massive campaign was launched all over the country to reach out to maximum people through booklets, handbills, vehicle or cycle jathas, conventions and village meetings.

Two new sections also joined the August 9 struggle. One was the All India Ex-Servicemen Movement, which was angry that they had been duped by the BJP regime on their just and long-standing demand for 'One Rank One Pension'. The second was the All India Ambedkar Mahasabha which was incensed over government inaction to reverse the Supreme Court decision to dilute the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act. It had earlier called for a Bharat Bandh on April 2, in which several Dalits were killed in police firing. That issue has now been settled through bills recently passed by Parliament.

(From: the write up of Ashok Dhawale)

WFTU Solidarity with the People of Kerala

In a letter to the CITU national secretary and WFTU dy. general secretary S. Dev Roye, WFTU general secretary George Mavrikos wrote, "I am closely following the situation and the tragedy in Kerala"...We feel deeply sorry for this natural destruction that has caused the life of hundreds of people in the area and created so much catastrophe and problems in the infrastructure and the daily life of our fellow working class of India in the area of Kerala." "The International Congress of Energy that gathers in your country, trade union leaders of the sector of energy and chemicals from around the world will be an event of international solidarity of major importance especially at this moment for Kerala." "The WFTU will symbolically contribute with the amount of US \$5,000.

9 August, 2018 Jail Bharo Movement



West Bengal



Tripura



Assam



Odisha



Jharkhand



Chhattisgarh

9 August, 2018 Jail Bharo Movement



Uttar Pradesh



Uttarakhand



Haryana



Rajasthan



Punjab



9 August, 2018 Jail Bharo Movement



Kerala



Maharashtra



Andhra Pradesh



Karnataka



14-15 August, 2018 Samuhik Jagaran



Karnataka



Telangana



Punjab



Rajasthan

‘Samuhik Jagaran’

On the Eve of Independence Day

K. Hemalata, President, CITU

FOR the first time, CITU has decided to conduct a *Samuhik Jagaran* programme all over the country on the night of 14 August 2018.

This was to remember the sacrifices made by thousands of workers, peasants and common people who made immense sacrifices in the struggle for freedom from British colonialism and to rededicate to the fulfilment of their aspirations.

Our Independence was not attained through the efforts of one individual or one party. The toiling people of the country, the working class, peasants, adivasis etc were in the forefront of the struggle in many parts. Along with their struggles against economic exploitation and feudal oppression they also fought colonial rule which was reinforcing such exploitation and oppression. They sacrificed all they had, their jobs, their earnings, their families and their lives, with the belief that an Independent India free from colonial exploitation and oppression would make great strides wiping out illiteracy, poverty, inequalities, unemployment and oppression of any kind; an India where all citizens will have equal rights and opportunities irrespective of their caste, creed, religion or gender. They had the huge advances made by the Soviet Union under the socialist system before their eyes. The youth symbolised by Bhagat Singh and his comrades in arms and all progressive sections who participated in the freedom struggles aspired for a similar society in India.

But the path of development that the ruling classes chose after Independence belied all their expectations. The advent of neoliberalism made matters worse. Even the little gains made and the rights won are being snatched away from the toiling people. The ascent of the RSS and the BJP poses a grave threat to the unity and democratic and secular values of our country.

Thus today, it becomes necessary for the working class and all sections of the toiling people to once again remember the vision of their forefathers who fought for Independence and take the pledge to continue the fight to realise their dreams.

It was with this objective that the CITU general council decided to observe *Samuhik Jagaran* all over the country on the night of 14-15 August night. It has noted that such programme, which was being observed by the Karnataka state committee of CITU since the last couple of years, had evoked good response particularly from the young workers in the organised sector and also scheme workers.

It was decided to involve, in addition to workers, people from different walks of life like intellectuals, artists, and progressive people in addition to the workers and also organise various activities including cultural performances to carry the message. Though there was initial hesitation among the leadership of several CITU state committees on the feasibility of organising such a programme, efforts were made to implement the decision of the general council.

AS per reports received so far, *Samuhik Jagaran* was held in over 388 centres - mainly state / district / taluk / mandal headquarters - in more than 234 districts in 17 states. While in many centres the *Jagaran* was held throughout the night, in some centres it was concluded by midnight. A total of over 44,200 people, most of them young workers, participated in it.

It could not be held in Chhattisgarh due to the death of the Governor, in Kerala because of the grave flood situation, in Jammu and Kashmir, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh.

In Andhra Pradesh, the *Samuhik Jagaran* was held in 19 district headquarters. Hundreds of workers participated with their families. Cultural programmes were conducted in all the centres

while in some, competitions were conducted and prizes were distributed. In the end after midnight pledge was taken by all the participants.

Around 100 workers participated in the *Samuhik Jagaran* in Karimganj district of Assam. In 34 places in 24 other districts, flag hoisting was done and the purpose of the programme was explained. Around 5,000 people participated in these programmes.

In Delhi, the programme was held in Ghaziabad and Noida. Women and children participated in good numbers. Janam performed a street play. Candle light procession was held in one centre. The programmes concluded at 11.00 pm.

The participants in the *Samuhik Jagaran*, which was held in the main centres in 6 district headquarters in Gujarat, were mostly Anganwadi employees and ASHAS. Around 200-400 participated in each centre with the total participation of 1900. Peasants also participated in one centre.

The programme was held in 18 district headquarters in Haryana. In addition, in 1 district it was held on 15 August. It was reported to have been observed in 4-5 districts in Himachal Pradesh

In Jharkhand CITU observed the programme in 12 major cities in 12 districts by conducting discussions, debates, seminars etc on different topics related to the vision of Independence and the situation today in which many intellectuals, students, youth and women participated. Slide and film shows, competitions for children and other cultural programmes were held. Pledge was taken at midnight.

Samuhik Jagaran was observed in 60 centres in 25 districts of Karnataka. Despite the rain, which threatened to disrupt the programme, 9190 workers participated. While in the state capital, Bengaluru, and some other district headquarters, it was held throughout the night. In many others the programme had to be concluded by midnight because of the rain. In some centres it was held as indoor programme. A 102 year old freedom fighter was felicitated in Bengaluru. Despite the heavy rain which lashed the city in the evening, around 1500 participated and most of them stayed throughout the night. Cultural programmes were held in all places.

Full night *Jagaran* with cultural programmes, speeches etc was observed in 3 places in Madhya Pradesh while in 3 other districts it was observed well past midnight.

600 to 1500 workers participated in each of the 6 centres, from where reports have been received in Maharashtra. Altogether not less than 5000 participated. Workers enthusiastically participated in the *Jagaran* and the cultural programmes. This has created an opportunity to bring out the different talents of the workers. Family members and children also participated in many places. The children participated in cultural programmes. In general it was highly appreciated by the common people.

Different programmes were held throughout the night in Rourkela and Paradip in Odisha. *Samuhik Jagaran* was held in more than 11 districts. In Rourkela, marathon with the slogan 'I will run for the nation, to save our Independence'; quiz and essay competitions, debates, seminars, patriotic song competition, sports and other cultural events were held.

Samuhik Jagaran in Punjab was marked by torch light and candle light processions along with beating of drums in over 15 centres in 10 districts. The programme continued till the market places closed for the night. In Hoshiarpur, candle light march and *Jagaran* were held in front of the house of the industries minister. The village chowkidars and transport workers marched beating tin boxes and held meetings in 100 villages.

In Rajasthan, night long *Jagaran* was held in at least 1 district whereas in 15 others it was observed till midnight. In another district it was observed on 15 August.

8096 workers and 3216 others including peasants, agricultural workers, women and students participated in the programme in Telangana, which was held in 140 centres in 29 out of the total 32 districts in the state.

In Uttarakhand, *Jagaran* was held in 4-5 district centres in which hundreds of workers and some peasants also participated. Cultural programmes were held.

The programme evoked great enthusiasm and widespread appreciation in West Bengal. Around 1600 workers from 12 districts gathered in Kolkata and stayed awake throughout the night.

It was held in 4 more centres with the participation of 700–4000 workers in each. In all the centres the programme was held from dusk to dawn. Eminent persons from the cultural, literary, sports fields and professional participated. Documentaries of tea workers' struggles were presented in the programme organised in Darjeeling. People contributed for the entire expenditure of the programme in Malda; they also provided food to the participants.

ON the whole, the innovative programme of *Samuhik Jagaran* was successful in attracting attention of the young workers to the vision of the common people who fought for Independence and the need to continue the fight today to realise that dream.

National Convention of Workers 28 September 2018; Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi

Central Trade Unions (CTUs) in their meeting of 21 July 2018 in New Delhi decided to hold a joint National Convention of Workers on 28 September 2018 at Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi from 10.30 A.M. to chalk out a programme of action including two days strike in pursuance of workers common demands. CITU's all national office bearers; and delegations of state committees and industrywise federations, as per the quota fixed vide CITU circular of 8 August, 2018, will participate.

Joint Statement of CTUs

4th August, 2018

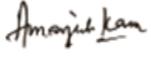
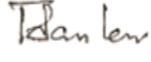
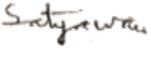
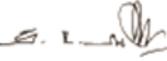
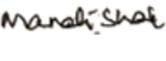
Dear friends,

The CTUs in their meeting on 21st July 2018 had taken serious note of the continuous and more aggressive steps by the NDA govt. against the labour rights, pushing various codes disregarding views points/suggestions of CTUs, having brought fix term appointment as a policy etc.

In this back ground it was decided to intensify our ongoing agitation unitedly. The decision for holding a National Convention of workers to chalk out a programme of action and the time schedule for joint conventions at state level (also at district level where- ever possible), sectoral national conventions and any other format etc to lead for preparation to organise two day Nationwide General Strike by the end of the year.

The convention will be held on 28th September 2018 in Mavlanakar Hall from 10:30 AM.

The delegation from respective unions will be decided after consultations and would be communicated to all.

				
INTUC	AITUC	HMS	CITU	AIUTUC
				
TUCC	SEWA	AICCTU	LPF	UTUC

On Devastating Flood in a Century **Kerala will surmount**

A. K. Padmanabhan, Vice President, CITU

'Unprecedented Devastations', these or any other words are not enough to explain what happened in the 3 weeks of August in Kerala. The worst ever flood in the State in last 94 years. But, with all the changes that happened geographically and also through infrastructures built up during this period, the situation is incomparable. It was not a localized disaster. Almost all parts of the State faced the fury of nature. With floods ravaging, even the first floor of the multistoried buildings were in inundated. Crops, plantations, shops and business - the damages are huge.

Under the direct leadership of the chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan, State governmental machinery rose to the occasion; and with the timely help of armed forces and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and people's active support the challenges were met. The people of Kerala rose like a giant coming out in this crisis. They faced the calamity with dedicated volunteers saving thousands of lives and live stocks. Nearly 15 lakh people took shelter in the relief camps run by the Government but maintained by thousands of men, women and school children serving as volunteers. The most notable among these volunteers in the rescue operations were the fishermen, who moved to the interior of Kerala in their boats risking their own lives creating new chapter of sacrifices and saved nearly 75,000 lives.

From the reports which came out during and after the rescue operations, it is clear that, people did not face any shortage of essentials in the camps. Even officials of UNICEF, who visited the relief camps, went on record to say that these camps were maintained in very high and safe conditions.

This was made possible with the huge and massive support and solidarity from all parts of the country, literally from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and also from foreign countries. Money and material flowed. Unprecedented was the involvement of various sections of people. It will be beyond anybody's capacity to list out various sections who came out in support of Kerala through contributions and solidarity – from small children with their piggy boxes to senior citizens living in orphanages!

With water levels receding, rescue operation come to a close. Now it is time for relief and reconstruction. Kerala chief minister has declared that building up New Kerala is the aim now.

Government of India has given Rs.600 crores as immediate relief. Chief Minister Distress Relief Fund received Rs.1027 crores as on 30 August. Huge amount of materials reached the relief camps. Workers, employees, officers and others, not only from Kerala, but also from various States, especially from nearby states like Tamilnadu contributed in a big way through money and materials. In Kerala two days wages and in Tamilnadu one day wages was offered especially by government employees and teachers, Central and state PSU workers in transport, electricity etc. At the call of CITU, its unions have launched countrywide collections drive.

Call for One Month's Wage

Kerala chief minister has given call to all Keralites living in Kerala and outside to contribute one month's wage, can be given in 10 installments, to which there is encouraging response. Kerala State CITU has appealed to all workers and employees to donate a month's wage.

The way the challenge has been met by the administration under chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the people of Kerala has attracted the attention of the media, intellectuals and activists all over the country and abroad. The unity of the people of Kerala has been further cemented in facing there challenges. As CM Vijayan said "Kerala will surmount with the united efforts of the people". We know that the challenges are enormous, but, people in unison can surmount those. We shall overcome.

Monsoon Fury and the Losses

Usually Monsoon starts from 1 June. This year, from 1 June upto July end there was 15% additional rain and from 1 to 8 August it was 35% less. Then torrential downpour was there from 8 to 16 August, 362% more than usual rain. In Idukki alone it was 568% more.

In this flood 483 persons died; 14 persons missing; 140 persons hospitalized; 14,50,707 were in relief camps upto 21 August. By 30 August, 59,296 from 16,767 families were still in camps.

57,000 hector of agricultural land was under water. All the roads, bridges, tracks were damaged. Cochin airport remained closed for 15 days.

Actual total loss is still being assessed.

CITU's Urgent Call to Rush Fund and Materials

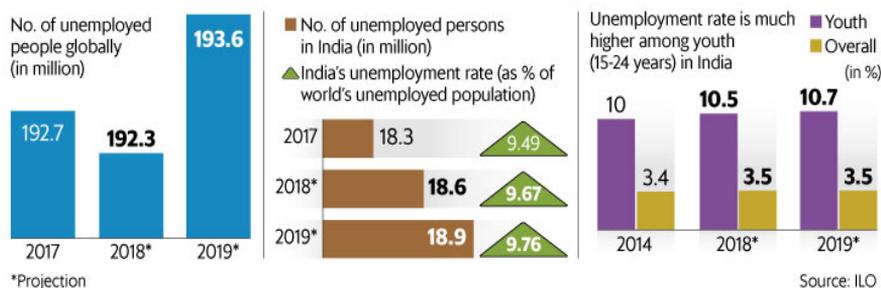
CITU gave an urgent call to its units, federations, unions and the working class at large across the country to stand in solidarity with and rush funds and materials to provide relief to the victims of devastating flood in Kerala in a century causing landslides; death toll rising and many reported missing; destroying and damaging houses; destroying agriculture and plantation; lakhs of people taking shelter in relief camps; all road, rail and airways being snapped; causing estimated loss of more than Rs.20,000 crore.

With water receding there is huge efforts of rehabilitation and building anew. The LDF government is doing commendable job in coordination with political parties; class, mass and social organisations; and local bodies. CITU Centre has rushed Rs.1 lakh to its Kerala state committee for the flood relief.

Unemployment & Vulnerable Employment: ILO

JOBS OUTLOOK

By 2019, India will have 18.9 million unemployed people, or 9.76% of such population worldwide.



(From: live mint, 24 January, 2018)

77% of Workers in Vulnerable Employment

- 77% of workers in India will have vulnerable employment by 2019 according to the ILO's *World Employment and Social Outlook* report 2018.
- In India the vulnerable employment level is higher than those of the world or the South Asia region. Out of 535 million labour force in India in 2019, some 398.6 million will have poor quality jobs.

(Vulnerable employment is characterized by inadequate earnings, low productivity and difficult conditions of work that undermine workers' fundamental rights. They are informally employed. The poor quality of jobs and high informality, the ILO said, is key for the high level of "working poors" or those living on incomes of less than Rs.198 per day.)

(From: live mint, 24 January 2018)

Road Transport

Workers Massive Nationwide Strike against MVA Bill

Estimated more than 3 crore road transport workers in all sectors resorted to countrywide magnificent strike against draconian Motor Vehicle Amendment (MVA) Bill, which is still pending in the Parliament, and for other major demands. The Bill is designed to pave the way for dismantling of state road transport corporations, expedite the process of complete privatization of public transport system and their take-over of them by big private corporates leading to monopolization and enhancement of the public transport fares detriment to the interest of the common working people, stated CITU statement on 7 August. The Bill will also lead to mass-scale jobloss of workers in public and goods transport sectors including the small transport operators. The strike was also against the frequent rise in diesel and petrol prices making the public transport costlier for the people, the statement said.

CITU congratulated the road transport workers and their trade unions for their massive countrywide united strike action and demanded of Modi government to take note of this massive countrywide protest and withdraw the MVA Bill pending before the Parliament.

In Rajasthan SRTC Workers 2 Days Strike, Agreement

Led by the joint front of CITU, AITUC, INTUC, BJMM unions and two retired employees associations; 17,000 plus employees of Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC) resorted to 48 hours statewide complete strike from midnight to midnight of 24-26 July in pursuance of their 13 point demands completely immobilizing over 4,800 RSRTC state and inter-state long distance buses in the depots; daily 5 lakh commuting public by RSRTC buses remaining stranded and RSRTC losing Rs.10 crore in ticket sale in two days. BMS union kept itself away from the joint front and the strike.

After the successful strike, a tripartite meeting of the joint front unions, RSRTC management and the state government was held on the very next day presided over by the state transport minister and arriving to a written agreement which includes government contributing Rs.150 crore urgently to RSRTC from which Rs.100 crore will be given to the retired employees against their dues and Rs.50 crore will be given to the employees as allowance; the transport minister and the RSRTC management assured to replace inoperative buses in phased manner; for implementation of 7th Pay Commission at par with the state government employees and on filling up of vacant posts, a high powered committee will be constituted, inclusive of the representatives of the employees' unions, which will submit report on the implementation of the these demands to the government within 31 August, 2018.

In Punjab Road Transport Contract Workers 3 Days Strike

Led by CITU-affiliated PUNBUS Contract Workers Union, about 5,000 contract workers of the state public sector Punjab Roadways in all its 18 depots and 2 sub-depots were on 3 days statewide strike on 16-18 July. The local bus stands wore deserted look and all 1,800 buses of Punjab Roadways remained stranded in depots, reported press from different parts of the State. The striking workers held rallies, demonstrations and gate meetings in front of bus depots. Militant demonstration was staged before the state transport minister. The minister fixed meeting for discussion on 26 July on contract workers demands.

In Tamilnadu Auto Workers Protest against Petrol Diesel Price Hike

Responding to the call of auto workers federation and CITU state committee, around 5,100 auto workers staged statewide demonstrations in front of collectors and RTO offices on 21 July against price hike of petrol and diesel.

Scheme Workers

Lakhs of Anganwadi Employees' Joined 10 July Demands Day

Responding to the call of CITU affiliated Anganwadi employees federation AIFAWH, lakhs of Anganwadi employees observed All India Demands Day to 'Save ICDS against Dismantling' on 10 July by staging demonstrations before the district administration offices across 24 States of Assam, Tripura, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, J&K, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Pondicherry; and in Odisha on 9 July and in Delhi on 20 July. Memoranda, addressed to the prime minister, were submitted to the district administrations registering protest against Modi government's moves to dismantle ICDS and for 3 point demands. Demonstrations were also held in front various central government offices and the central ministers in their constituencies at various places.

Government's ICDS dismantling moves include introduction of direct cash transfer in place of supplementary nutrition; opening of nursery schools in place of Anganwadi centres; and handing over the Anganwadi centres to corporates and corporate NGOs. The demands include 1) to immediately stop the move to introduce direct / conditional cash transfers and packaged food in ICDS, against mandatory Aadhar linkage for ICDS services and to stop privatisation of ICDS in any form; 2) to universalise and institutionalise ICDS, rollback budget cuts in ICDS and to allocate adequate funds for ICDS in the Central budget; and 3) to implement 45th and 46th Indian Labour Conference recommendations to recognise Anganwadi workers and helpers as 'Workers', pay minimum wages not less than Rs.18000 and provide social security including pension not less than Rs.3000 per month.

AIFAWH launched countrywide campaign for signatures on memorandum on these demands addressed to the PM. Nearly 3 crore signatures are expected to be submitted. The overwhelming reaction to the call by AIFAWH reflects the anger among the working class against the communal neoliberal government.

Anganwadi workers and helpers will join 'Jail Bharo' agitation on 9 August; *Samoochik Jagran* on 14 August with slogan "Freedom from malnutrition, illiteracy and ill health" and massive 50,000 mobilisation joining the 5 September Worker Peasant Sangharsh Rally in Delhi.

BMS and its Anganwadi federation also gave call of district demonstrations on 10 July. However, Anganwadi employees saw it as their divisive and diversionary move as was exhibited in their betrayal of 2 September 2015 jointly notified united all India workers general strike, just 2 days before withdrawing from it, as was their Anganwadi federation's *Delhi Chalo* programme just one week after the workers 9-11 November united Mahapadav.

Cement

Bipartite Industry Negotiation

On expiry of the last wage settlement in the cement industry, a bipartite wage negotiation between the Cement Manufacturers Association (CMA) and the representatives of the cement workers unions of 6 central trade unions (CTUs) - CITU, INTUC, AITUC, BMS, HMS and LPF - was held in New Delhi on 27 August. CITU was represented by Nisith Choudhury (convener of the CITU's newly formed National Coordination Committee of Unions in Cement Industry), Prakash Kumar from Tami Nadu and Kaluram Suthar from Rajasthan. A smaller committee was constituted with one representative from each of 6 CTUs and three from employers side. However in case of one's inability to attend, he can be replaced by the concerned organization. The smaller committee will report to the full negotiating committee for taking final decision. The first meeting of the smaller committee is scheduled to be held in Chennai on 7 September.

West Bengal

Tea Garden Workers 3 Days Unprecedented Strike Striking Workers in Front of Tea Gardens



(From left) 1. Alipurduar ; 2.Orad in Tarai; 3. Leader of CITU tea workers union Saman Patkan addressing the striking workers at Mirik Valley in the Hills (Courtesy: Ganashakti)

With the 3 days united strike of tea workers this 7–9 August under the banner of the Joint Forum of Tea Garden Workers of all 26 tea trade unions entered into a new phase in their ongoing movement with wider response to the call of Joint Forum irrespective of unions’ affiliation and across the three tea producing regions of Darjeeling Hills, Tarai and Doors in West Bengal mainly demanding fixation of minimum wages which is pending for revision for more than three and half years.

CITU’s Plantation Workers Federation leader and one of the conveners of Joint Forum, Ziaul Alam said that today workers are demanding minimum wages under Minimum Wages Act instead of negotiated wage settlement with paltry amounts.

Three days strike in the tea industry, called by the Joint Forum of 26 tea trade unions, entered its first day on Tuesday demanding minimum wages in the tea gardens since long. A minimum wage advisory committee was also constituted by the government in 2015, in which numerous meetings were held too, reported *Business Standard* on 8 August, 2018.

More than 400,000 tea estate workers from 370 tea gardens in the Himalayan foothills of West Bengal state, close to the picturesque Darjeeling hill station, stopped work at most tea estates in the region over pay reported U.K. newspaper *The Guardian* quoting French news agency *Agence France-Presse* on 7 August. “A vestige of British-ruled India, the tea plantations in parts of east and north-east India often make national headlines over wage disputes and poor working conditions for the workers,” it reported.

“The strike could result in an estimated loss of Rs 38-40 crore to the industry, the Tea Association of India (TAI) said,” according to PTI report.

In a statement from its all India centre on 7 August, CITU congratulated the heroic struggle of 4 lakh tea garden workers in West Bengal and the magnificent unity of workers developed through struggle demanding of the state government to notify enhanced minimum wages which is long overdue and committed by the TMC government to the Joint Forum. CITU called upon other sectors workers and unions to extend support and solidarity to the tea workers ongoing struggles.

Thousands of striking workers marched to Uttar Kanya and, when prevented by police,

started road blockade demonstrations paralyzing all vehicular movement. North Bengal had witnessed numerous road-blockade demonstrations by the striking tea workers determined to carry on their struggles braving atrocities by the TMC government, CITU said. The massive strike was joined even by the workers, having allegiance to TMC trade union, en masse while their leaders were moving with the state administration.

There is also churning among 30 lakh tea workers, united under Tea Workers Wage Revision Demand Forum, organising protest rallies in about 800 gardens in the adjoining State of Assam. They are also demanding upward revision of their existing minimum wage of Rs.137 and minimum wage under the Minimum Wage Act.

Haryana

Construction Workers Akrosh Rally

Thousands of construction workers from all over Haryana converged to Panchkula on 11 July to join CITU's Bhavan Nirman Kamgar Union's *Akrosh Rally* in front of the state construction workers welfare board's office and staging *Ghera Dalo* for hours together in pursuance of their demands and in protest against irregularities and corruption. The *Akrosh Rally* was preceded by two state level jathas addressing more than 100 meetings of construction workers in different parts of the state.

The Rally was addressed by CITU state president Satbir Singh; CPI(M) state secretary Surendra Malik; union's leaders including general secretary Sukhbir Singh, president Deshraj, treasurer Rammehar Singh and others; state leaders of agricultural workers union, Kisan Sabha and AIDWA.

In their address, the leaders highlighted the demands of construction workers in respect of their registration and accrual benefits from state construction workers welfare fund; and about corruption, misuse, discrimination and irregularities being indulged by BJP ruled state government related to construction workers welfare fund and its administration.

These include demand for offline registration of all construction workers, ensuring timely benefits, board's offices in all districts; and to stop online registration and its misuse; misuse and unplanned expenses like purchasing sewing machines in lot and their distribution by organising camps for political propaganda instead of organising camps for registration; absence of infrastructures in districts and non-recruitment of government staff; years together delayed payments for marriage and cremation in case of death; no payment for medical treatment and housing; availability of 14 benefits in place 22 declared benefits; illegally diverting and investing Rs.2,900 crore of accumulated welfare fund in the share market; districtwise dissimilarity and disparity in registration and availability of benefits etc. The government has political appointees of BMS representatives in the Board, discriminating against CITU and other unions; and BJP leaders in the advisory committee. None of them has any connection with the construction workers

CITU and the Union have been continuously agitating raising these demands and issues reaching the chief minister and the labour minister; and workers delegation discussing. Yet, there was no remedial measure by the government which forced them to hold this *Akrosh Rally*.

The Akrosh rally ended on getting a written commitment from the joint director of the Board, after his consulting the labour commissioner and the labour minister, fixing 17 July meeting between the union and the labour minister to favourably consider the demands and issues raised by them.

(Inputs: Rammehar Singh)

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

State	Centre	June 2018	July 2018	State	Centre	June 2018	July 2018	
AP	GUNTUR	280	284	MHR	MUMBAI	293	298	
	VIJAYWADA	278	284		NAGPUR	329	361	
	VISHAKHAPATHNAM	284	288		NASIK	307	335	
ASM	DOOM DOOMA TINSUKIA	264	270	PUN	PUNE	300	317	
	GUWAHATI	251	259		SHOLAPUR	301	310	
	LABAC SILCHAR	261	264		ORI	ANGUL TALCHER	303	315
MARIANI JORHAT	249	252	ROURKELA	307		310		
RANGAPARA TEZPUR	246	249	PUD	PUDUCHERRY		309	311	
BIH	MUNGER JAMALPUR	306	320	PUN	AMRITSAR	298	319	
CHD	CHANDIGARH	293	302	RJN	JALANDHAR	291	304	
CHS	BHILAI	318	322		LUDHIANA	281	286	
DLI	DELHI	265	283		AJMER	268	279	
GOA	GOA	319	332	TN	BHILWARA	278	280	
GUJ	AHMEDABAD	269	274		JAIPUR	277	289	
	BHAVNAGAR	272	287		CHENNAI	268	269	
	RAJKOT	280	290	COIMBATORE	279	277		
HRY	SURAT	264	265	COONOOR	298	315		
	VADODARA	269	272	MADURAI	281	283		
	FARIDABAD	264	274	SALEM	281	284		
HP	YAMUNANAGAR	277	287	TEL	TIRUCHIRAPALLY	289	290	
	HIMACHAL PRADESH	258	265		GODAVARIKHANI	298	310	
	SRINAGAR	269	272		HYDERABAD	250	253	
J&K	BOKARO	288	294	TRP	WARRANGAL	300	311	
		GIRIDIH	315		330	TRIPURA	266	267
		JAMSHEDPUR	338		346	UP	AGRA	320
JRK	JHARIA	325	340	WB	GHAZIABAD	292	318	
	KODARMA	338	361		KANPUR	303	326	
	RANCHI HATIA	337	360		LUCKNOW	294	320	
KNT	BELGAUM	298	298	VARANASI	293	314		
	BENGLURU	288	290	ASANSOL	314	323		
	HUBLI DHARWAR	312	317	DARJEELING	263	271		
KRL	MERCARA	302	303	DURGAPUR	316	317		
	MYSORE	302	304	HALDIA	321	330		
	ERNAKULAM	308	310	HOWRAH	280	285		
MP	MUNDAKKAYAM	309	309	JALPAIGURI	284	286		
	QUILON	342	348	KOLKATA	276	282		
	BHOPAL	293	313	RANIGANJ	265	279		
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Construction Workers Ghera Dalo In Haryana (Report Page - 25)



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Historic Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally



The Huge Procession from Ramlila Ground to Parliament Street



An aerial view of the March

Sea of Red in city as farmers rally for rights - ASIAN AGE

MAZDOOR KISAN SANGHARSH RALLY - Economic Times

Farmers, workers rally over loan waiver, wages - Financial Express

FARMERS' ANGER REACHES CAPITAL - Hindustan Times

Traffic stands still as one lakh protesters march on - Hindustan Times

Higher prices for crops, loan waivers, Swaminathan report: In sea of red, farmers seek green shoots - Indian Express

Thousands of farmers, workers paint Delhi red - The Hindu

Massive turnout at worker-peasant rally - The Hindu
Buisness Line

Farmers bring protest to national capital - Times of India

Print Media Headlines on Rally

