



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

16th conference of CITU

Chennai; 23-27 January, 2020



President Hemalata inaugurating the conference



General Secretary Tapan Sen summing up the conference

*(We regret misprint of above photos in February 2020 issue of The Working Class.
Hence, we are reprinting the same in this issue – Editor)*

CITU in Countrywide Campaign

CITU 16th conference gave call for countrywide at work places and house to house campaign against CAA-NRC-NPR during February-March 2020. The campaign is to culminate into massive district level rally on Bhagat Singh's martyrdom day on 23 March 2020 taking pledge on the Constitution of India and involving all class, mass and social organisations including of peasants, agricultural workers, students, youths, women and other social organizations.

Taking Pledge on the Preamble of the Constitution of India

Preamble of the Constitution

We, the People of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a **Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic** and to secure to all its citizens **Justice**, social, economic and political **Liberty** of thought, expression, belief, faith and to promote among them all **Fraternity** assuring the dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, DO HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION

Editorial

WORKING CLASS

MARCH 2020

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Changes in the Character of Working Class Movement

Countrywide workers general strike took place on 8 January 2020. This strike was distinctly different from earlier strikes, not only in intensity and spread of the strike, but also in the character of the movement even when compared to the countrywide general strike which took place just a year before, on 8-9 January, 2019. Being a revolutionary trade union, it is necessary for CITU to note these changes in the character of the movement.

The conditions are changing fast as the crisis ridden capitalism, worldwide, is ruthlessly shifting the burden on the workers and the people for maximizing profit with divisive agenda in an attempt to undermine the suffering people's resistance movement.

In India, definitely class contradiction has intensified with the increased attacks on the lives and livelihood of the workers and other toiling sections; attacks on the workers social security; attacks on the workers legal and conventional rights and practices; closures and increased job losses; record unemployment; spiraling prices and recessionary trend of economy engulfing the country. Added to this is the all out drive of privatisation with crony capital in the front; newer attack on secular foundation of Indian Constitution like CAA, MRC and NPR; attack on democratic institutions and norms with pronounced authoritarian trends; attack on federalism; pro-imperialist tilt towards a subordinate state etc. An oligarchy state is attempting to emerge out.

Against all these, people's opposition is also growing with massive participation of workers and peasants and, significantly, of students, youths and women in an unprecedented scale in recent memory.

All these movements are converging towards a broad democratic movement the contour of which was seen in the 8 January 2020 workers general strike with wider people's participation and the workers joining the movement of other sections.

There is urgent need of dissemination of this understanding at all level of CITU functionaries – in the committees of its units, unions and federations. There is also an urgent need of rapid organisational reorientation emphasising on building organisational connection with vast number of workers outside CITU and trade union movement in general and also to unify the cadres at all level with the common understanding as urgent organisational tasks.

Anti-imperialist Protest

A joint meeting of All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO); All India Agricultural Workers' Union (AIAWU); All India Anti-imperialist Forum; All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA); All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS); All India Lawyers Union (AILU), All India Students Federation (AISF), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC); Bank Employees Federation of India (BEFI), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), Focus on Global South, Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) and Insaaf was held at BTR Bhavan in New Delhi on 17 February 2020. The decided the following:

1. To oppose the visit of US President Donald Trump to India on 24 and 25 February 2020, as it is detrimental to the interests of Indian people;
2. To organise protests throughout the country on the 24th February by involving vast sections of people, mass organisations and social movements who are concerned for safeguarding the sovereignty of our country and protecting our agriculture, public sector, health and education sectors;
3. To campaign extensively among the people explaining the harmful impact of the pro-US policies of Indian government and mobilising them to participate in the protest programmes;
4. To expose the similar anti-minority, anti-migrant, misogynist, racial, communal, casteist and divisive policies of both the US and Indian governments';
5. To approach all like-minded, patriotic, progressive, secular, democratic organisations and individuals and request them to join the protests;
6. Develop creative, catchy and attractive slogans, memes, art forms and campaign material and use all available resources, including social media, to spread these ideas among the people.

The organisations also appealed to all organisations which are ready to join the protests.

Notice

CITU Secretariat Meeting

BTR Bhavan, New Delhi, 14-15 March 2020

- Agenda: (1) Review of the 16th Conference of CITU; (2) Review of the General Strike of 8th January 2020; (3) Preparation for the General Council Meeting of CITU to be held on 31 May, 1-2 June 2020 at Kolkata; (4) Future course of action; (5) Any other issue.
- This time General Council meeting at Kolkata will be preceded by the conclusive ceremony of golden jubilee year of CITU on 30 May 2020 at Kolkata.
- Office Bearer tier of the Working Women Committee will meet on 13 March at 11 am.

**Tapan Sen, General
Secretary**
06.02.2020

50 Years of CITU

Reaching the Unreached

K. Hemalata

The 16th conference of CITU called upon the working class to 'Scale up struggles to Change policies'. This can be achieved by reaching the unreached workers and linking their day to day issues with the policies of the government and helping them realise their real friends and enemies by exposing the politics that determine the policies.

The 14th conference, CITU initially gave the call to 'Reach the Unreached'. Since then it is being reiterated in all the meetings of the CITU general council and working committee in the intervening period.

What does it really mean? Why is it so important? How far have we been able to implement it? How to put it effectively into practice?

Today, the working class is under unprecedented attacks. The wages and benefits of the workers are under attack. The hard won rights of the workers are under attack. Their livelihood is under attack. Their culture, their social life is under attack. Their unity is under attack. The working class ideology is under attack. Mask class identity, bring forth and focus on the diversity, pit one religious, caste, regional, language, gender identity against the other, disrupt their unity and weaken their struggles – this has been the strategy of the ruling classes. This has become necessary for the big corporates, the big capitalist class to protect their own profit, to easily grab public properties and amass their wealth.

As trade unions represent the united strength of the working class, the weapon in their hands to fight for their rights, the capitalists seek to suppress the trade unions to thwart all united resistance against such attacks. In doing so, they utilise all the resources at their disposal including money, media and the State and its machinery. These attempts get further intensified when the capitalist system is under crisis, as it is today.

Today, only around 10% of the total workers in our country are organised in any trade union, as their members. Overwhelmingly large numbers of workers are not unionised. Thus, they are deprived of their only weapon to fight the increasing attacks of capital. Though they know they are being exploited they feel helpless. Without reaching them and organising them on their issues, creating awareness and confidence on their united strength and mobilising them into struggles, it is not possible to defeat neoliberal attacks and changing policies.

CITU's objective, as enunciated in its constitution, is not confined to just improvement in the wages and working conditions of the workers. It seeks to end exploitation. Based on scientific analysis of the development of society including the present capitalist system, CITU firmly believes that exploitation cannot be ended within the present profit driven capitalist society. That is why CITU's constitution clearly mentions changing society as its objective.

This can be achieved not by a 'One Man Army' or a small group of people. CITU's constitution says that this can be achieved only through class struggle. The working class has to play a leading role. This understanding – of the role of the working class and class struggle as a means of changing society – is what distinguishes CITU from other trade unions.

Strong unbreakable unity of the working class overcoming the existing differences in religion, language, caste, regions, gender etc, which the present BJP government and the ruling classes are trying to further perpetuate and deepen, is the pre requisite for developing such powerful class struggles. 'Scaling up struggles to Change Policies' is the path towards achieving CITU's constitutional objective of changing society.

But such unity cannot be attained when only around 10% of the working class is organised in any trade union and even out of them it is only a miniscule minority who have a clear understanding about the 'Why' of what is happening. Why are labour laws being changed? Why are wages not increasing while prices are

increasing? Why the workers, who produce the wealth of the country, need to starve, their children deprive of education, suffer from malnutrition and die due to lack of proper medical care? Why engineers and scholars have to work as trackmen in the Railways? Why is society not able to better utilise their services?

Once the workers know answers to the 'whys', the 'whats' and 'hows' will follow. What can be done to change this? How can it be done?

It is with this objective – to provoke thinking and help workers understand the reality - that the CITU has consistently been emphasising the need to approach all workers, including those beyond the periphery of CITU, who are not members of CITU. That is what we mean by and that is what we want from reaching the unreached. That is what we want to achieve by 'linking up issues with policies and exposing the politics that determine the policies'.

This definitely cannot be carried out with the huge shortage of cadres and activists that we have today. How and wherefrom do we get cadres, particularly young cadres? There is a general perception that workers today are not willing to spend their time and energies for union work. Particularly the young workers are concerned only about their career advancement; they do not want to take responsibilities in the unions. What is the reality?

Recent experiences across the world including our country point otherwise. Thousands of youths have been in the forefront in the struggles against neoliberalism, against attacks on the democratic rights and against imperialist interventions in their countries - in France, Chile, Brazil, Bolivia, Venezuela etc. In our country, thousands of young workers in the private organised sector, working in the modern industries – Yamaha, Hyundai, Foxconn, Honda, Toyota and many others have been fighting for their rights. The educated Railway trackmen are fighting against injustice and for dignity. The young outsourced employees in different government departments are coming out in struggles. Thousands of young workers are fighting against the NPS. Most of the scheme workers, most of them women and young are fighting for their demands. It is mainly the young women and men who are actively protesting against the CAA/NPR/NRC. This is what is witnessed across the country today and is being reported by the leadership of unions working in different sectors.

Cadres can be developed only by involving all these young workers and many more active workers in the day to day activities of the unions, making them feel that they have a role to play in the functioning of the unions. This requires democratic functioning. CITU's constitution and all its organisational documents, including the latest Kozhikode document on organisation emphasised the importance of democratic functioning.

The CITU constitution - 4 (b) – says 'The CITU considers that democratic functioning of the organisation at all levels and of its constituents is essential to achieve its objectives'.

The Kozhikode document on organisation said 'Democratic functioning is not only about regular conferences and meetings. We have to conceive and practice democratic functioning as an effective and powerful tool to involve widest possible workers in our activities at all levels and raise their consciousness and quality to enable ourselves to achieve the objectives outlined in our Constitution'. Further, 'Trade union democracy is closely linked with the active involvement of rank and file members in day to day activities of the union – in the decision making process as well as in the implementation of the decisions.

But even today, except in very few cases, the participation of ordinary workers in the activities of most of the unions is only passive. Directives are given to them from 'above' and workers are supposed to implement those. The persistence of this weakness in democratic functioning was also noted in the recently concluded 16th conference of CITU, which was held in the Golden Jubilee year of its foundation.

We will be able to develop thousands of cadres in all sectors, organised and unorganised, if we can effectively practice democratic functioning which, as specified in our Constitution, is of crucial importance in achieving our objective. This alone will, in turn, enable us to Reach the Unreached and explain to the vast masses of the workers the 'link between their day to day issues and the policies of the government and the politics that determine these policies'.

In this Golden Jubilee Year of CITU, let us focus ourselves on improving democratic functioning, reach our cadres, reach our activists, reach our members and reach all the workers. It is a huge task, but with determination we certainly can do it.

8 January 2020 - Workers General Strike

(Continued from February, 2020 issue)

Tripura

For the first time since the formation of BJP government in Tripura, the 8 January 2020 strike got massive response from the masses in general and working class in particular. It was a Bandh like situation in the state despite threat of physical assaults before, on the day and after the strike. 12 persons were seriously injured in this physical assault. 126 picketers were arrested.

Over 5.45 lakh workers and employees participated in the general strike which include over 60% in the only industrial cluster in the State; almost 100% in transport; 70% by scheme workers; 98% in shops and establishments; 45% in construction; 70% in central university including teachers; 100% medical representatives; 45% state government employees; 50% in BSNL, total in bank and insurance; 100% in central government employees; etc.

Despite physical threats, around 9 lakh people were contacted in the campaign; conventions were held in all subdivisions; 400 GB meetings were held; 30,000 posters, wall writing, 25,000 leaflets, several street corner meetings, bazaar meetings, miking, rally, procession etc were organised. All fraternal mass organisations were seriously involved in the preparation and success of the strike. (Shankar Prasad Dutta)

Assam

The strike was massive and unprecedented in the State. Public transport system was totally paralysed. Public sector units in oil, coal, bank, insurance, BSNL, water transport etc were deserted. *Rail Rokos* were successfully organised. Shops and commercial establishments downed their shutters. It was Bandh like situation in the state. All sections of the people of Assam have responded.

The workers and employees came out on the street spontaneously. Thousands of strikers joined rallies shouting slogans against BJP government and also against ABVP goondaism in the JNU.

During strike, rallies and picketing; about 2500 striking workers, students including state leaders of central trade unions and federations, of students and women organisations were arrested by the police at various places of Assam. (Tapan Sarma)

West Bengal

In West Bengal, 8 January 2020 strike was total and successful with participation of huge number of working people supported by all sections of the society. This strike was wider than the previous one.

Industry-wise strike was 95% in jute; 70% plus in tea. In banks, insurance, BSNL, Garden Reach Ship Builders, Kolkata Port; Indian Oil, Oil India and BPCL the strike was 100%. 100% central and state government employees abstained from duty. In electricity sector, the strike position improved. Medical and sales representatives' strike was 100%.

In Kolkata and in districts; private bus, trucks, taxis were totally absent from road. In transport sector the strike was 80%. Industrial zones at Barrackpur, Durgapur, Raniganj, Asansol, Raghunathpur, Bakreswar, Farakka, Kalyani, Budge Budge, Dankuni and in other industrial estates, the strike was 100%; at Haldia it was 70%. After longtime, successful strike took place at Hide Road industrial areas.

Shopping malls in Kolkata and in districts remained closed. Small traders, shop keepers and bus owners also joined the general strike across 23 districts. Almost all of the schools and colleges remained closed due to strike call of the students' organisations. Members of students unions also remained with the workers in picketing on the roads. Strike in ICDS was 75%

Situation was somewhat different in coal and steel. It was 30% in coal and 27% in steel; but, 70% in small and medium sponge iron factories.

For the first time it was strike in IT sector with 35% participation; in SDF call centres it was 100%. Unorganised sector strike was also wide-spread.

Militant workers with other toiling sections were on the streets organizing barricades and pickets and resorting to *Rail Roko* and *Rasta Roko* affecting rail and road services.

TMC state government, in consonance with BJP government at the centre, resorted to repression, police using lathi charge on peaceful picketers at several places; arresting in hundreds and TMC goons joining in the attacks. To discredit the striking workers, police vandalized the buses and burned the cars in Malda district. (*Anadi Sahu*)

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Mass dharna, procession, public meetings, etc. were organized jointly by striking workers of CITU unions with government employees' organisation throughout the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Main programme was organized at Port Blair where a mass dharna was staged at local Tiranga Park. Mass dharnas, demonstrations and public meetings were also held by striking workers at Diglipur Bazar; processions were brought out at Orakatcha bazaar, Havelock, Hut Bay, Car Nicobar, Kamorta, Katchal, Campbell Bay and some other parts of the islands.

Odisha

8 January 2020 strike was more successful compared to 8-9 January, 2019 strike. The industrial clusters were closed. Bus, truck, auto rickshaw operations were paralysed. Shops and commercial establishments were closed. Anganwadi, Asha and MDM workers were on strike all over the state. Workers of private industries such as refractories, cement, J&K Paper Mill, IDL Chemicals, Survesh Refractories, Siva Minerals, OCL Sponge and small and medium industries all over the state were on strike. Pradeep Port was paralysed due to strike. Coal, steel, Nalco, NTPC, regular workers participation was marginal while contractors workers participation was cent percent.

Public sector mines in Kkata Barsuan was closed. Contractor workers 100% participated in OMC mines. (*Ramesh Jena*)

Jharkhand

It was unprecedented strike and a Bandh like situation in the State. People extended their massive support. Estimated about 50 lakh workers and employees were on strike in the State.

In coal, the strike was 60% in CCL and BCCL; affected production in ECL; coal transportation and dispatch were totally paralysed. In Bokaro Steel Plant, permanent workers' participation in the strike was less, but contract workers strike was total. In Tata industrial areas it was partial in Tata Motors and associated industries; but was massive in Adityapur-Gamharia industrial areas. In copper, strike in HCL was 100%, in mines production was affected. In Kiriburu, Megahatuburu, Chiria and Manoharpur iron ore mines production was affected. Palamau iron ore and soft stone mines remained closed. Road transport workers' participation was impressive. Long distances transport was totally paralysed. Strike was partial in HEC.

In Santhal Pargana, Beedi workers were on 100% strike; coal transportation from Lalmatia to NTPC remained affected. In banks and insurance the strike was total; only some SBI branches remained open. Postal, BSNL, central and state government employees were on strike. More than 3 lakh scheme workers in the state were on strike mainly Anganwadi and MDM workers. 10,000 MRs strike was total. *(Prakash Viplav)*

Bihar

More than 10 lakh workers and employees in all 38 districts joined the strike. It was a Bandh like situation in the state. The educational institution bandh call by students' organisations evoked good response across Bihar. The Rural Bandh call given by Kisan and Agricultural workers also responded well in the rural areas. Industrial workers at Hajipur, Bihita, Fatuha and Barh have participated in strike and made it a total success. Industrial workers at Hajipur, Bihita, Fatuha and Barh have participated in strike and made it a total success.

Road transport workers federation and Bihar Rajya Auto Rickshaw Chalak Sangh ensured total paralysation of road transport system in the state. It was total strike by Anganwadi, ASHA and MDM workers across the state staging demonstration before the district administration. It was total strike in bank, insurance and state government employees as well as unorganised sector workers. Women workers participation in strike and mobilisation were much higher than the men workers. *(Anupam Kumar)*

Uttar Pradesh

In 16 districts, the strike was visible with demonstrations defying the restrictions imposed by Yogi government. In Varansi industrial cluster the strike was total,

In bank, insurance, postal department, telecom, central and state governments offices the strike was 60% - 90%. Thousands of electricity employees resorted to work boycott. In BHEL Jhansi, the strike was over 90%. Large number of Anganwadi, Asha, Mid-Day-Meal workers participated in the strike. Medical representatives' strike was total. Varanasi industrial areas strike was successful.

Processions and rallies were brought out and demonstrations were staged in front of the district collectors offices in most the districts. Public meeting was held joined by workers numbering 1000 to 3000 each. *(Prem Nath Rai)*

Delhi

The strike in Delhi-NCR was near total in most of the industrial areas of Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida, Sahibabad and Ghaziabad.

In Sahibabad Site 4, the major industries like Auto Gear, PVG, Anupam Products, Holy Switch, Indure, Cooper Standard, CEL, Atlas Cycles (Haryana) Ltd., MBD, SS Packers as well as in Mohan Nagar, Hapur Road were totally closed. Despite heavy rain, successful strike rallies were held in the industrial areas in which 1000 to 1500 workers participated.

In Noida and Greater Noida, the strike was partial to total in Sector 2,3,4,7,8,11, 63, 64, 67, Hosery Complex, NSEZ Phase-2, Chhajarasi, Habibpur, Devla, Tigari etc. Rallies with 250-500 striking workers were held.

In East Delhi, the strike in the industrial areas of Patparganj, Jhilmil Colony, Loni Road, Seema Puri was partial to total. The strike in Central Warehousing Corporation, Ghazipur was total. Rallies of 100-200 striking workers were held in industrial areas.

In South Delhi, the strike in Okhla Phase I & II was about 50% and in Okhla Phase III it was around 40%. Dharna was staged on the road for more than 1 hour due to which there was road blockade.

In North Delhi, the strike in Bawana, Badli, Bolder and some other areas was partial to total. Badli Industrial area was totally closed. In rallies at Bawana around 1000 workers joined and at Badli 300 workers joined.

The strike in insurance and banks was total. The workers of Airport Authority of India other surrounding establishments supported the strike by wearing badges and holding gate meetings.

All central trade unions brought out an impressive rally from Shaheedi Park culminating at ITO Chowk addressed by national and local leaders. (*Anurag Saxena*)

Punjab

At the call of 10 central trade unions and over 60 national and state federations of employees; lakhs of workers – in transport, power, MNREGA, construction, forest, scheme, village chawkidars, central and state governments' employees, banks and insurance employees, workers of unorganized sector went on strike in Punjab and Chandigarh. Several independent trade unions and employees federations also joined strike.

Joint and independent protest rallies and demonstrations were organized. At over 150 places roadways were blockaded. *Rail Rokos* were resorted to at Mansa by AIKS, Ludhiana by CITU; and at Amritsar jointly by trade unions, students and other mass organizations resorted to road blockade.

Raikot and Sudhar in district Ludhiana, Sunam in district Sangrur and Mansa city remained closed for the whole day. In Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur, Bathinda, Moga, Amritsar, Shaheed Bhagat Nagar, Jalandhar, Sangrur, Barnala, Mansa, Pathankot, Patiala, Firozepur and Chandigarh strike got good response. (*Raghunath Singh*)

Jammu & Kashmir

In Doda district, more than 400 construction workers, engaged in Dulhasti Power Station, Pakaldul, Kiru-kawar, Hydro HE Project participated in strike and held a rally even in snowfall. In Ramban district, about 500 hundred of HCC company of Sawalakot HE Project resorted to strike and participated in rally and submitted memorandum to the DC. In Poonch district, 200 workers engaged in Micro Hydro power project participated in one day strike.

In Jammu district, 500 construction workers, ASHA, Mid-Day-Meal, loading and unloading workers; insurance, bank and railway employees participated in protest demonstration at press club, Jammu. In Srinagar, nearly 400 horticulture workers, Anganwadi, construction, electricity workers participated in joint protest demonstration despite restriction and imposition of Sec. 144. In Kathua district, 600 construction, border roads, farmers, Rehbreylalim teachers, ASHA. MDM workers participated in protest rally and submitted memorandum to the DC.

Rajasthan

Textile - All 5000 workers of Bhawani Mandi textile mill in Jhalwar district and all 1,600 workers of Rings textile mill were on complete strike. **Road Transport:** Main unions of AITUC and INTUC in RSRTC did not join the strike. CITU union, with its limited capacity, was on strike which affected road transport in Sikar, Churu, Anupgarh and Hanumangarh districts. **Autos:** CITU union with 1500 workers at Sriganganagar and 600 workers at Sikar were on strike. **MRs:** All 5000 across the state were on strike. **Industrial Areas:** CITU unions in 6 units in Jaipur industrial area were on strike including Mini-Ratna PSE, Rajasthan Electronics &

Instruments Ltd (REIL). **Rawat Bhatta Atom Power Plant** – only 12,000 contract workers were on strike. **Copper:** Hindusthan Copper Ltd in Khetri in Rajasthan was on total strike. **Brick Kiln:** 30,000 workers in 300 brick kilns in Sriganganagar and 2000 in Hanumangarh were on strike. **Construction:** In most of the districts construction workers with variable degrees were on strike. **Cement:** No strike. **Neemrana in NCR:** Daikin, in Japanese zone where police firing took place in last strike, declared holiday and closed factory. Neemrana ADM imposed restriction on all public gathering on the plea of local bodies election. **FCI and State godowns:** 2000 head-loaders in Sriganganagar and 16000 in Hanumangarh were on strike.

District-wise – Strike was wide-spread in Sriganganagar (including in 9 Tahsils), Hunumangarh and Sikar districts; partial in Jaipur. Traders also joined general strike in Sriganganagar. Rallies were brought out in 13 districts including Jaipur. (V. S. Rana)

Madhya Pradesh

Workers resorted to 100% strike in Guna NFL, Gwalior Distillery, Tripti Distillery, Antari Sleeper Factory, 3 factories in Neemach and few factories in Indore; 100% strike in 3 cement factories, Heavy Engineering Works and Hightech factory in Rewa; and 100% strike in Balaghat private manganese factories.

In coal, the strike was 70% - 80% in WCL, 40% - 80% in SECL and 20% in NCL. In road transport the strike was 60% to 90% in 21 districts. Among scheme workers strike took place in 35 districts by Anganwadi and in 22 districts by ASHA workers. Strike took place in 35 agricultural Mandis in the State. It was total strike by MRs. Effective strike took place in bank, insurance and in income tax. In defence factories the strike was 20% to 35%. Led by CITU union strike took place in PWD, PHE and in irrigation departments of the state government in 5 districts.

Effective picketing blocked the entry gate in Hindalco at Barganwa by CITU union and by all unions at BHEL, Bhopal which affected production.

Despite imposition of Sec.144 in most of the districts, the striking workers brought out rallies and staged demonstrations in different parts of the state. (Promod Pradhan)

Chhattisgarh

In the state, the strike was almost complete. In bank, insurance, pharma strike was 100%; Balco 95%, coal 60-70%, govt employees more than 90%, Anganwadi workers 80%. All unions unitedly staged demonstration before all gates of Bhilai Steel Plant. (M. K. Nandi)

Maharashtra

The strike on 8 January 2020 has far exceeded the strikes in previous years. In Mumbai and Raigad, there was strike at Mahindra, Larsen Toubro, CEAT, Bharat Petroleum and ONGC. After decades there was total strike at the Mazagon Dock shipbuilding yard. In automobile manufacturing centre of Pune, there was strike at Mahindra and Bajaj. Workers at Alfa Laval, Sandvik and Atlas Copco also struck work. The Nasik industrial area was completely paralysed by the strike. At Aurangabad, there was strike in Bajaj, Goodyear Tyres and in other major factories.

Mass mobilizations of industrial workers on 8 January also exceeded all previous records. Perhaps for the first time in Maharashtra, mobilizations and rallies involving more than 15,000 workers each took place simultaneously in all major industrial centres such as Nasik, Aurangabad, Pune and Kohlapur. In Mumbai and Solapur there were multiple rallies each exceeded 15,000 workers. There was a huge rally at Azad Maidan involving thousands of Anganwadi workers, bank employees, dock workers, railway workers etc. There were massive mobilizations in Nagpur, Jalna, Raigadh and Thane.

At Shahpur, jointly by AIKS and CITU, over 3000 workers–peasants resorted to *Rasta Roko* on Mumbai Nasik freeway. *Rasta Rokos* and dharnas involving the AIKS and AIAWU also took place at several locations in rural Nasik district, and also at Ahmednagar, Pune, Sangli, Nanded, Parbhani, Beed, Latur, Jalna, Buldhana, Wardha and Nandurbar.

Another significant feature of the strike campaign was its political character. In addition to workers charter of demands, the campaign focused on condemning the attacks on the JNU students by the Modi-Shah anti-democratic regime. The strike pamphlets criticized the attempts of the regime to divide the working people by raising spurious issues like the CAA and NCR; against communal game plan of the BJP-RSS; and to defend the Constitution.

An important aspect of the strike campaign is that leaders of the trade unions expressed the need to strengthen the unity of the trade unions post-strike period on sustained basis in order to face the onslaught of the Modi government and defeat it on specific issues like the proposed privatization of BPCL and other important PSUs. (*Vivek Monteiro*)

Goa

A bandh-like situation was prevailed despite hostile attitude of BJP State government.

Gujarat

Gujarat witnessed the flurry of strike activities in Surat, Ahmadabad etc especially by Anganwadi workers, besides the total strike by bank and Insurance employees.

In Gujarat, in many districts, where no other trade union existed, the Anganwadi employees and ASHAs not only participated in the strike defying threats by the BJP state government, but took initiative to organise demonstrations

12th Convention of AICC of Working Women

Amritsar, 6-7 April 2020

- 12th convention of its All India Coordination Committee of Working Women will be held at Amritsar in Punjab on 6-7 April, 2020. Delegate fee is Rs.500 each.
- State-wise notified quota includes women national Working Committee and General Council Members of CITU from the concerned states. Additionally president / general secretary and in-charge of working women of CITU state committees will also participate.
- The delegation should represent working women from sectors like construction, brick kiln, textiles/garments/tailoring, fisheries; traditional industries like handloom, coir, cashew etc; plantation, beedi, municipal, contract workers in government departments / PSUs; IT/ ITES; private hospital; private teachers; transport; pharmaceuticals; SEZ; domestic; home-based industries, embroidery, matches and fireworks etc.

All-women unions like Anganwadi, ASHA and MDM workers etc. together should not constitute more than 10% of the total delegation.

8th January 2020 Strike

(Continued from February, 2020 Issue)

Delhi



Central TU national leaders addressed the rally in Delhi

8th January 2020 Strike

Haryana



Himachal Pradesh



Rally in the snowfall at Shimla

Rajasthan



At Jaipur

Uttar Pradesh



At Lucknow

Bihar



Jharkhand



8th January 2020 Strike

Tripura



A deserted road in the capital city, Agartala



**Former Chief Minister Manik Sarkar on way to office,
attacked by BJP goons on strike day**

8th January 2020 Strike

West Bengal



Strike day - Deserted road connectors of Kolkata



Strike Rally in Kolkata

Meeting of Central TUs with Labour Minister

On Service Delivery under EPF & ESI

R. Karumalaiyan

The Union Labour Minister invited the leaders of all Central Trade Unions in a meeting on 12 February 2020 for suggestion on the setting up of the 'Implementation Monitoring Cell' on the service delivery, in the first phase, by (i) ESIC, (ii) EPFO and (iii) CLC (C). On behalf of CITU, I attended the meeting.

CITU's Presentation

CITU's presentation in the meeting focused on strengthening the existing ESI and EPF; coverage / non-coverage; besides the delivery of the service to those who are already covered.

CITU said that the most important issue, basically connected with the strengthening and well-functioning of the existing systems of social security like EPF and ESI, is augmentation of their financial resources. Unfortunately, however, the rate of contributions - the only wherewithal to augment their financial resources – are being reduced. The contributions to ESI have already been reduced - employer's contribution reduced from 4.75% to 3.25% of the wages being paid to the employee and employee's contribution reduced from 1.75% to 0.75% with effect from 01.07.2019. Similarly, in case of EPF it is now being proposed in the Social Security Code to disturb the existing 12% rate. CITU demanded that the previous rate of contributions should be allowed to prevail in both the cases.

On the question of coverage, CITU said that had the enforcement not being tardy and allowed free enforcement of the Acts, the ESI and EPF coverage would have been doubled. To substantiate, CITU referred to the report of the RPFC (Sholapur) on the non-coverage of EPF in the power-loom sector. So, the enforcement has to be activated to ensure the coverage as per respective legislation.

Another issue is that judicial vacancies in PF tribunals are not being filled in time. Many vacancies exist for long. CITU urged the government to expedite the matters with all urgency.

With the above introductory comments, CITU submitted a written note on existing specific deficiencies with suggestions.

On EPFO

The prime target should be enrolment of all the eligible establishments and of all their workers. This cannot be left to the will of the employers. Labour department / EPFO should take steps to ensure that these are properly implemented.

Regular inspection is one more important aspect. The present system of "*no inspection*" does not help. There should be prompt steps from authorities to inspect and ensure coverage etc. when a worker or trade union takes up this issue with the authorities. The complainant workers / trade unions should be kept in the loop when these steps are taken by the authorities. There should be a time limit of maximum of one month to complete this process. In this, enumerating workers should be done in the first visit of the Inspector itself. Thereafter the verification of records can follow.

Lot of existing subscribers of EPF have been facing innumerable problems about their names and date of birth in the records which do not match with Aadhaar and other documents. Linkage has become impossible especially when such problems are there for contract workers.

beedi workers and others like loading and unloading workers. CITU demanded to evolve a proper method to solve this problem.

- Non remittance of the deducted subscriptions and also the employer's share is a serious problem. Many superannuating workers find it difficult to settle their accounts.
- Dealing with the applications for advances/final settlement etc., are now done online. There should be 'Help-Desks' in all the regional/sub-regional offices for the subscribers. This is not being ensured now resulting in innumerable problems.
- Any deficiency in the applications, filed by the subscribers, should be pointed out without delay. Complaints are there that the applications are returned at the last minute even on flimsy grounds so as to show 'nil pending'.
- The grievance procedure needs urgent changes. The grievances of the subscribers are not looked into properly and repeated complaints get no response.
- There should be a guaranteed mechanism to reply to the complaints/grievances from registered trade unions / regional committee members / CBT members. Now, even the CBT members could hardly get a reply or even an acknowledgment.

On ESIC

When 5 years ago, ESIC decided to extend coverage throughout the country, it was welcomed. But still now needful medical / administrative infrastructures have not been developed. As a result, the newly covered workers do not have the access to the benefit of ESI Schemes.

- Workers remain in the dark as to whether their employers have paid contribution in time or not. They become victim, when they were denied treatment. As implemented in EPF, ESIC may also update the IPs through SMSs.
- When wages are not paid due to such eventualities like closure/lock-out/suspensions, employers' contributions are to be continued for at least nine months, so that treatment may not be denied on that ground.
- At present, there is no distance norm depending upon contour of the region for setting up of dispensaries. As a result, workers are to travel 40 / 50 KMs or more. There should be some norm depending upon contour of the region as well as IP density.
- At certain point of time medical practitioners became reluctant to register themselves as ESI panel doctors due to non-remunerative payment of fees per insured persons (IP). Now the rate has been revised. But ESIC has not widely circulated the same through news media / advertisement. So the benefit does not reach to the IPs.
- The circular dated 16 November 2016, issued without ESIC approval, sought to clarify that wherever ESIC hospitals are having all SST services, patients will not be referred to private hospitals for such treatment. No distance or periphery has been mentioned. As a result, the patients are harassed / denied treatment.
- IPs need awareness on their entitlement of benefit. That awareness can be propagated through a simple IP handbook in regional languages. In absence of such handbook, at the time of dire necessity, they run from pillar to post. Some ESIC offices use to misguide them.

Due to the undue delay in decision making for critical referral treatment; IPs are left to believe that they are being harassed. Those patients are thrown to private touts.

The Labour Minister assured to take the opinions seriously and promised to hold another meeting shortly exclusively to hear the views on labour laws codifications.

(R. Karumalaiyan is CITU national secretary at the centre)

INDUSTRIES & SECTORS

Oil & Gas

National Convention of Oil & Petroleum Workers at Kochi **Decides 2 Days Nationwide Strike**

Swadesh Dev Roye

Workers of BPCL have been resorting to united actions, including a massive strike on 28 November, 2019 against Modi Government's decision to sell out BPCL, the Maharatna oil refining and marketing PSU giant. Three national conventions in series were jointly organized by their national federations - AIPWF, NFPW and PGWFI - at Mumbai on 26 October, at New Delhi on 20 November and at Kolkata on 22 December 2019.

In addition, oil PSU workers in general and the BPCL workers in particular took part on the 8 January 2020 all India workers general strike in unprecedented scale. The huge magnitude of the strike by BPCL workers both on 28 November and 8 January has clearly demonstrated the determination of the workers to fight Modi Government's move to privatise BPCL. The workers have participated in the strikes braving all threat and intimidation by Modi Government and prohibitory orders obtained from various High Courts by the managements at the behest of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.

The Kochi National Convention

On 9 February 2020, yet another national convention, jointly by all three national federations, was held at BPCL Kochi refinery premises. Delegates came from all over the country representing all the branches of Oil & Natural Gas - production, refining, pipeline and marketing - representing ONGC, OIL, GAIL, IOCL, BPCL, HPCL, MRPL, Balmer Lawrie, Pawan Hans and more. Significantly, more than 50 delegates from Mumbai, representing inter alia ONGC, BPCL, HPCL, IOCL, the oil sector both upstream and downstream hub of the country, participated in this convention.

The convention greeted the workers of Kochi Refinery of all trade union affiliations for the non-stop protest programme through various types of agitation and mobilization in front of the BPCL Kochi refinery continuing for the past four months. Further, the convention also saluted the people of Kerala for supporting the struggles of the BPCL workers by holding demonstrations, procession, protest marches etc. Additionally, the convention once again recalled with pride the resolution adopted at the Kerala Legislative Assembly and the letter written to the Prime Minister by the Chief Minister of Kerala protesting the move to privatise BPCL.

CITU General Secretary Tapan Sen inaugurated the convention. Chandrashekar, President of INTUC, Kerala; Elamaram Kareem, General Secretary, CITU, Kerala; and leaders of all the three federations addressed the convention. 23 delegates participated in the deliberations on draft of 'Kochi Declaration' and the same was adopted unanimously. Swadesh Dev Roye, Secretary CITU and In-charge for oil Sector, delivered the concluding speech.

Huge Procession and Open Massive Convention

A huge of 4000 strong procession of workers of Kochi refinery, their family members, workers from other PSUs of Kochi and the delegates attending the convention marched 10 KMs on the streets of Kochi

culminating in mass convention addressed by the national leaders, who addressed the convention, and by the former Chief Minister of Kerala Oommen Chandy.

BPCL is Not the End, But the Beginning

The Kochi Declaration of the convention noted that the Modi Government's policy towards Oil & Petroleum sector continues to be destructive and disastrous from all counts. It is consistently weakening the financial and operational strength of all the Oil PSUs, both in upstream and downstream sector, by making them heavily indebted on the one hand and putting them into severe operational and competitive disadvantage by the brazenly pro-private sector policy intervention. Ultimate motive is to make them financially and operationally weak to facilitate their privatization for a song to the advantage of the private sector oil tycoons, both foreign and domestic.

The examples of discovered potential oil and gas fields with ONGC being handed over to private players for exploration; making ONGC heavily indebted by way of forcing it to takeover HPCL and the born sick oil & petroleum company of Gujarat Government; and measures taken to put the PSU refineries at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the Ambanis and other private players in the field; exposed such ill and anti-national motives of the BJP Government. Under the liberalized OALP (Open Acreage Licensing Policy) in the first four rounds, private sector has captured majority fields: Vedanta – 51, OIL – 21 and ONGC – 17.

In the meantime foreign oil companies are entering deeper into the production and refining sector in India. Saudi Aramco and Abu Dhabi Adnoc are almost certain to have 50% equity holding in the 60 million tonnes per annum capacity proposed integrated refinery and petrochemicals at Ratnagiri, Maharashtra.

Such policies will spell disaster in the national economy and impose much heavier burden on the mass of the people in respect of their fuel-dependence under compulsion, besides adversely affecting the livelihood of the workers and employees of this sector. This cannot be allowed to succeed and the trade union movement in the oil sector must exercise all their might to resist such dangerous game plan.

Entire Energy Sector Workers should Unite

The Convention noted that all the segments of energy sector are facing challenges of different dimensions from the destructive policies of the Government. It is interesting to note that the CPSUs which are currently under the hammer of privatization, pertains inter alia, to the sectors (oil & petroleum, coal, power and shipping & Container business) already under the business domain of two monstrous crony capitalists of Modi Government - Ambani and Adani.

The ongoing economic crisis has pushed the public sector energy industries also into the grip of the crisis. Amongst the list of eight core sectors, which have suffered serious slide in growth, the worst record of the sector in last 14 years, five are from energy sector – Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products and Electricity. The situation is full of challenges and also providing opportunities for integrated united resistance struggles of entire energy sector workers.

The Action Programme Adopted at the Kochi Convention

- Two days Nationwide United Strike in all the units of BPCL on 20-21 April 2020. Notice to be served latest by 4 April 2020.
- One day Mass Casual Leave by the employees of all other oil and petroleum establishments on 20 April 2020 in solidarity with striking BPCL employees and massive joint solidarity demonstration on 21 April 2020.
- Joint Conventions of Oil & Petroleum Workers in all oil & petroleum centres particularly in Mumbai, Kolkata, Guwahati (or in any appropriate centre in Assam), Chennai, Kochi, Bangalore and Delhi (NCR) to be held within March 2020.
- Continuous programs for propagating the message against privatization among the masses by

organizing Street Corner meetings, Vehicle Jathas in every locality of the respective states to create awareness among the masses on the disadvantages of privatization during the month of March 2020.

- In April 2020, starting from 1st of the month, unions should convene mass conventions of public with the participation of the central / state public sector and Govt. sector employees with families in every district, wherever BPCL establishments are functioning, till 15 April 2020.
- Also Massive Campaign for the All India Strike on 20 - 21 April 2020 by holding regional, local and unit level conventions / meetings, gate meetings, slogan shouting, demonstration, processions, distribution of Leaflets, poster and also any other form of campaign according to the local situation.
- April 15 to 20 'Relay Group Dharna' from 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM in BPCL at Refinery Gate, CO & RHQs, Bottling Plants, Depots and other possible locations all over the country.
- Next National Convention in Oil and Petroleum Workers under the banners of NFPW, AIPWF and PGWFI at Kochi to be jointly hosted the affiliates of the three Federations tentatively on 3 May 2020 to decide further action programme including indefinite strike action to resist privatization.
- Affiliates of NFPW, AIPWF and PGWFI in the all the oil & petroleum CPSUs to organize solidarity campaign and agitation programme during 15 - 20 April 2020 in support of the anti-privatisation struggle of BPCL workers.

Scheme Workers

Dharna by NCLP Staff before the Parliament

About 1000 staff of National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme, coming from 7 states, staged a day long dharna in front of the Parliament at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on 14 February 2020 demanding increase in the budget allocation for the scheme and increase in their remuneration, paid as honourarium, at par with other Central Government's schemes etc.

NCLP scheme for rehabilitation through education of child labour at the age group 9-14 years is functional in 270 districts in 21 states in which around 35,000 staff are working for years together as 'volunteers' with remuneration as paltry 'honourarium'. After new survey of the child labour, in many districts the scheme is going to be closed with threat of jobloss of these staff.

Railways

AILRSA staged Dharna before the Parliament

On 19 February 2020, about 3000 railways locomen - train pilots, assistant loco pilots and shunters - with their families, coming from different parts of the country, marched in procession under the banner of All India Loco Running Staff Association (AILRSA) from Ambedkar Bhavan in New Delhi and, on reaching Jantar Mantar, it culminated into a rally, staging dharna and holding mass meeting before the Railway Ministry.

Form IV

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The dharna was inaugurated by CITU General Secretary Tapan Sen. In solidarity the Organising Secretary of IREF Diesel Modernisation Works of Patiala Jainuddeen also attended the dharna and rally.

The rally and dharna were organised by AILRSA in pursuance of their 10 points charter of demands which include inter alia revision of running allowance as per RAC 1980 formula effective 1 January 2016; reduction of duty hours to 10 hours pending further reduction to 8 hours and 90 hours fortnightly limit and on other working conditions; higher pay and higher pension as per pay revision; scrapping NPS; on pending victimization issues; recognition of AILRSA; against railways privatisation. (Inputs: M. N. Prasad)

EPS 95

Commutation Rule Changed

Pension Commutation related issues of EPS 95 pensioners were being discussed in CBT for nearly five years. CITU had, with examples of individual workers, raised the issue of injustice in this.

Under pension commutation of EPS 95 pensioners, a deduction from the pension after getting commutation was continuing indefinitely. Commutation amount is that of 100 months. Yet, the same was continuing in many cases for more than 300 months also. In between, commutation system itself was withdrawn.

After long discussion and decisions many a times, it has now, on 20 February 2020, the Government has notified that deductions will be stopped after 15 years with effect from the date of publication.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 20th February, 2020

G.S.R.132 (E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6A read with sub-section (1) of section 7 of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 (19 of 1952), the Central Government hereby makes the following Scheme further to amend the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, namely:-

1. (1) This Scheme may be called the Employees' Pension (Amendment) Scheme, 2020.
(2) It shall come into effect from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.
2. In the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, after paragraph 12, the following paragraph shall be inserted, namely:-

"12B. Restoration to normal pension in cases of grant of commutation. - The normal pension in respect of those members who availed the benefit of commutation of pension under the erstwhile paragraph 12A of this Scheme, on or before the 25th day of September, 2008, shall be restored after completion of fifteen years from the date of such commutation."

[F.No. R-15011.01.2019-SS-II (Pl.)]

R.K. GUPTA, Jr. Secy.

Note : The Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 was published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, section 3, sub-section (1) vide notification number G.S.R. 748(E), dated the 16th November, 1995 and was last amended vide notification number G.S.R. 285(E), dated the 4th April, 2019.

This will again means that for those, whose pension was being deducted after even 15 years, the money lost forever.

CITU demanded that the money deducted after completion of 15 years be returned and commutation facility be reintroduced.

- AKP

Fifty Years of CITU

Working Women

Fight for Equality & against Discrimination

A.R.Sindhu

The Objective and the Perspective

Fifty years of struggles of CITU includes the uncompromising struggle of women workers against patriarchy, exploitation, unequal treatment and discrimination against women at workplace, in the society and within the trade union movement. While advancing in the revolutionary path, fighting all kinds of deviations and vices, CITU has also confronted one of the biggest stumbling blocks of social advancement, the discrimination against half of the humankind, women.

CITU Constitution sets the perspective right **“The CITU believes that the exploitation of the working class can be ended only by socialising all means of production, distribution and exchange and establishing a Socialist state. Holding fast the ideal of socialism, the CITU stands for the complete emancipation of the society from all exploitation.”** CITU stands **“For the abolition of discrimination based on caste, like untouchability, on gender, and religion”**.

This clarifies two things – one, the task of emancipating the society from all exploitation can never be complete without emancipation of women who comprise half of the society. Second, under the present capitalist-landlord society, the basic problems of women will never be solved completely.

With this perspective, in its foundation conference itself, CITU, through a resolution, has set the task of organizing the women workers and take up their problems. It realized soon the necessity of additional efforts to make any breakthrough as described in the report to the first convention of working women called in 1979 in Madras (Chennai). **“The CITU had to take the decision to call a special conference because it was found that the grievances of working women were unattended; the Government was indifferent; the employers were hostile; and even the trade unions were not very enthusiastic about their demands. In many strikes that the working class fought, there were few instances when special demands of the working women were given prominence. It was also found that women, even in industries and occupations where they formed a sizeable section were hardly represented in the leading bodies of the unions.”**

B.T. Ranadive, founder President of CITU, said **“The trade union movement cannot attain its full stature unless the women’s contingent plays its role in organising and leading the unions. Thousands of women participate in strike struggles, face jail and repression, go through privations along with men workers and employees. But they are far from occupying the position in the unions that is their due.”**

Thus, the **All India Coordination Committee of Working Women, AICWW (CITU)** was formed with the aim of taking up the issues of women workers from the trade union platform, organise the vast number of women workers in CITU, train them and bring them to the leadership position. Vimal Ranadive was its first convener.

Advancing working women’s movement

During last forty years, the AICWW (CITU) could advance much the work among the working women and could bring the problems of women workers into forefront. There are many achievements to highlight since then.

Issues of equal remuneration, equal opportunities in promotion, maternity and abortion leave, paternal leave, maternity benefits and crèche, breast feeding breaks, separate toilets for women workers, compulsory night work, sexual harassment at workplace, health hazards for women at work etc were taken up at various

levels. CITU is instrumental in bringing these issues to the forefront, sensitizing the workers and the society and making of many laws and rules.

CITU is first trade union in India to form women's sub- committee / women's wing. Now the fraternal trade unions of central and state governments, bank, insurance, BSNL employees, as well as other central trade unions including AITUC, INTUC and HMS have formed women's wings / sub committees.

With conscious effort to unionise women, targeting such sectors where women work in large numbers, we could increase our women membership. Women's membership in CITU has increased from 6.2% in 1979 to 12% in 1991; to 17.75% in 1998; and to 33.3% in 2018. The women's representation in various committees of CITU has seen a visible improvement. At present, CITU has 8 women office bearers including the President. Two state committees of CITU have women Presidents. Many district committees have women Secretaries and Presidents. Almost all state committees have women office bearers and state committee members.

Separate trade union classes are held at various levels to promote and train women cadres. Workshop on sexual harassment at workplace at national level was held twice involving the state leaders of CITU. On the basis of the discussion and feedback, organizational measures are taken to correct wrong practices, if any. CITU is the only one trade union in our country to form an internal complaint committee against sexual harassment.

Scheme workers movement

CITU has organized women workers from traditional sectors like beedi, plantation etc in large numbers. It was at CITU's initiatives that have brought all-women sectors of scheme workers like of Anganwadi, ASHA and Mid Day Meals, para teachers etc into the mainstream of trade union movement.

Starting in early eighties, the Anganwadi workers were organized in a federation AIFAWH by AICCWW (CITU). Now, AIFAWH has grown into a nearly 5 lakh strong federation spread in 24 states and has been in the forefront of struggles which led to many achievements including the increase in wages of the employees. AIFAWH and AICCWW (CITU) were instrumental in organizing the other scheme workers, especially the ASHA and MDM workers. The struggles of the scheme workers have made a visible presence of CITU even in the remote areas of the country and were helpful in spreading its influence to the countryside. The women organized under the class platform and their struggles with class identity had broken many stereotypes – in struggles and in organisation - and brought new confidence to the working women's movement. This has not only helped to bring more leaders and cadres to the trade union movement, but also has brought the question of women's unpaid labour, particularly the care-work into the discourse. Now, the scheme workers are a militant and dynamic force within the trade union movement, raising the class exploitation as well as social oppression from the trade union platform.

Critical Review

But the patriarchal and feudal attitude in the society is so prevalent that the resistance is also equally strong. This necessitated periodical review of the tasks and ideological clarity in working women's front by CITU.

The commission paper on 'working women a class perspective' clarifies **"First and foremost, we must reassert that the tasks on the working women's front we have enjoined on ourselves is an inextricable part of our commitment to class struggle. It is not borne out of any false notions of 'sympathy' towards women who constitute a 'weaker section' in our society."**

Review has been done in every conference of CITU. Special discussions were held in the 6th and 10th conferences. Commission papers were discussed and adopted on 'working women a class perspective' in 10th conference and 'on organizing women workers' in the 13th conference. Apart from

thes, national workshops were held of AICCWW(CITU) along with the state leadership of CITU, one in 2003. Workshop on sexual harassment at workplace was held twice at national level.

Both Bhubaneshwar document and Kozhikode document on organisation have self critically reviewed the work among working women. The Kozhikode document on organisation (2018) says **“The specific issues of working women including sexual harassment are not taken up by many of our unions. They are not included in the charter of demands. Women’s subcommittees have not been formed in most of the unions in sectors having large number of women workers. Work among working women is considered to be the responsibility of the women cadres alone. Gender issues are not included in the curriculum in the classes. Patriarchal attitude, prevalent in the society, continues to exist within the organisation. Overcoming these weaknesses will help in further expanding our work among working women and expansion of CITU among newer sections of workers.”**

These weaknesses including timings of meetings not suitable for women, non-payment of travel expense to women comrades for attending meetings, not including them in negotiating teams etc are still prevalent within the organisation which need to be weeded out.

The 16th Conference of CITU, held in the Golden Jubilee year, discussed the question of social oppression in the current day situation of increasing exploitation, in a commission paper and has taken up certain tasks.

Present Day Challenges and Tasks

Neoliberalism uses all means - all retrograde feudal, obscurantist social systems and practices like caste, religion, gender ethnicity etc, existing in our country for further exploitation and profiteering. The social oppression in the country is bound to increase in similar proportions or even more as the increase in disparities; particularly when during last few years under the present dispensation the government which is basing itself on the one hand on frantic drive for neoliberal policies based on free market, commodifying anything and on the other hand basing on a retrograde ideology of ‘Hindutwa’ based on feudal, patriarchal, caste based value system. The ruling classes use every feudal remains such as the caste and gender based discriminations, to advance not only their political interest, but also their economic interest.

The class exploitation in our society is many times manifested in the form of social oppression intermingled in such a manner it is difficult to separate. The women’s social status and the unpaid labour at home is being extended in many occupations especially the care-work and services and is used for maximizing profit. The casualisation in the services is done through such non-recognised occupations as ‘scheme workers.’ **It is estimated by a high level panel of UN that over 51% of work done by women in India is unpaid and not counted in national statistics. The unpaid care-work and housework we are doing is subsidizing the cost of care and supports the economy, according to ILO. But it is never recognized. It is estimated that unpaid domestic work contributes more to the economy than the manufacturing, commerce and transportation sectors.** It is also estimated that women’s wages are 34% less than those of men doing the same job in rural areas, and 19% less in urban areas in our country. India has the highest gender wage gap.

The AICCWW discussed and decided to take up these crucial issues and demanded that these unpaid jobs be accounted in the GDP calculations and the extent of women’s contribution to the economy and their exploitation be assessed and recognized.

CITU conference has decided to take up this issue of unpaid labour, the root of women’s exploitation, along with other crucial issues of unemployment which is reflected in the low work participation of women, unprecedented atrocities and violence against women and representation in decision making bodies in a wide campaign followed by a militant action on the occasion of the International Working Women’s Day. In the golden jubilee year of CITU, on 6th March 2020 (since 8 March is a Sunday), under the leadership of AICCWW (CITU), thousands of women workers will organise massive ‘jail bharo’ struggle throughout the country. This will mark a new stage in the struggles for emancipation of women in India.

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

State	Centre	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	State	Centre	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019
AP	GUNTUR	302	303	MHR	MUMBAI	322	322
	VIJAYWADA	307	309		NAGPUR	407	405
	VISHAKHAPATHNAM	310	316		NASIK	377	380
ASM	DOOM DOOMA TINSUKIA	296	303		PUNE	358	357
	GUWAHATI	290	292		SHOLAPUR	350	347
	LABAC SILCHAR	286	285	ORI	ANGUL TALCHER	346	346
	MARIANI JORHAT	275	281		ROURKELA	337	342
	RANGAPARA TEZPUR	269	268	PUD	PUDUCHERRY	326	334
BIH	MUNGER JAMALPUR	366	367	PUN	AMRITSAR	356	357
CHD	CHANDIGARH	322	325		JALANDHAR	334	340
CHS	BHILAI	346	344		LUDHIANA	309	317
DLI	DELHI	309	311	RJN	AJMER	297	300
GOA	GOA	332	343		BHILWARA	307	308
GUJ	AHMEDABAD	301	299		JAIPUR	325	326
	BHAVNAGAR	307	309	TN	CHENNAI	288	295
	RAJKOT	307	309		COIMBATORE	300	307
	SURAT	292	289		COONOR	345	349
	VADODARA	292	295		MADURAI	318	323
HRY	FARIDABAD	288	289		SALEM	308	311
	YAMUNANAGAR	311	312		TIRUCHIRAPALLY	310	322
HP	HIMACHAL PRADESH	281	283	TEL	GODAVARIKHANI	346	348
J&K	SRINAGAR	290	292		HYDERABAD	275	278
JRK	BOKARO	320	321		WARRANGAL	328	332
	GIRIDIH	361	370	TRP	TRIPURA	277	280
	JAMSHEDPUR	381	380	UP	AGRA	375	377
	JHARIA	378	380		GHAZIABAD	349	350
	KODARMA	408	406		KANPUR	357	361
	RANCHI HATIA	412	418		LUCKNOW	357	358
KNT	BELGAUM	315	324		VARANASI	355	356
	BENGLURU	305	308	WB	ASANSOL	356	356
	HUBLI DHARWAR	348	353		DARJEELING	287	290
	MERCARA	320	326		DURGAPUR	336	338
	MYSORE	321	323		HALDIA	368	369
KRL	ERNAKULAM	327	332		HOWRAH	302	305
	MUNDAKKAYAM	332	337		JALPAIGURI	296	295
	QUILON	368	372		KOLKATA	299	303
MP	BHOPAL	344	345		RANIGANJ	309	316
	CHHINDWARA	326	329		SILIGURI	302	302
	INDORE	298	297				
	JABALPUR	337	337				
ALL INDIA INDEX						328	330

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AILRSA Dharna before Railways Ministry

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Convention against BPCL Privatisation

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Inquilab Zindabad – Long Live the Revolution

Throughout the trial of the Delhi Bomb Case Bhagat Singh and Bhatukeshwar Dutt would enter and leave the court premises shouting “inquilab zindabad”. When the magistrate asked them the meaning of this slogan they submitted a written reply whose concluding two paragraphs number 7 & 8 are as below. This highlights Bhagat Singh and his comrades in arms’ vision of a modern inclusive India.

“(7) I, Bhagat Singh, was asked in the lower court as to what we meant by the word ‘Revolution’. In answer to that question, I would say that Revolution does not necessarily involve a sanguinary strife, nor is there any place in it for individual vendetta. By Revolution we mean that the present order of things which is based on manifest injustice must change. The producers or labourers in spite of being the most necessary element of society, are robbed by their exploiters of the fruits of their labour and deprived of their elementary rights. On the one hand the peasant who grows corn for all, starves with his family, the weaver who supplies the world market with textile fabrics, cannot find enough to cover his own and his children’s bodies; the masons, the smiths and the carpenters who raise magnificent palaces, live and perish in slums; and on the other the capitalist exploiters, the parasites of society, squander millions on their whims. These terrible inequalities and forced disparity of chances are heading towards chaos. This state of affairs cannot last; and it is obvious that the present order of society is merry-making on the brink of a volcano and the innocent children of the exploiters no less than millions of the exploited are walking on the edge of a dangerous precipice. The whole edifice of this civilization, if not saved in time, shall crumble. A radical change, therefore, is necessary; and it is the duty of those who realize this, to reorganize society on the Socialistic basis. Unless this is done and the exploitation of man by man and of nations by nations which goes masquerading as Imperialism is brought to an end, the suffering and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented and all talk of ending wars and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy. By Revolution, we mean the ultimate establishment of an order of society which may not be threatened by such a breakdown and in which the sovereignty of the proletariat should be recognized, and as the result of which a World Federation should redeem humanity from the bondage of capitalism and misery of imperial wars.

(8) This is our ideal, and with this ideology for our inspiration we have given a fair and loud enough warning. If, however, it goes unheeded and the present system of Government continues to be an impediment in the way of natural forces that are welling up, a grim struggle must ensue involving the overthrow of all obstacles, and establishment of the dictatorship of proletariat to pave the way for the consummation of the ideal of the Revolution.

Revolution is the inalienable right of mankind. Freedom is the imprescriptible birth right of all. The labourer is the real sustainer of society. The sovereignty of the people is the ultimate destiny of the workers.

For these ideals and for this faith we shall welcome any suffering to which we may be condemned. To the Altar of this revolution we have brought our youth as incense; for, no sacrifice is too great for so magnificent a cause. We are content; we await the advent of Revolution;
“LONG LIVE REVOLUTION.”

Signed /-

BHAGAT SINGH
BATUKESHWAR DUTT
6-6-1929