

UTUC (LS) Memorandum to Finance Minister lashes out at new economic policy

The Union Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, invited the Central Trade Unions for a pre-Budget discussion on the new economic policy on 4th December last in New Delhi. The United Trade Union Centre-Lenin Sarani (UTUC-LS) was represented by its All-India President, Comrade Prithish Chanda, and its All-India General Secretary, Comrade Tapash Dutta, both members of the Central Committee of the SUCI.

Comrade Chanda and Comrade Dutta in a memorandum described how the industrial and economic crisis had aggravated further rapidly after the introduction of the so-called reform programmes by the Central Government headed by Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao. Severely criticising and demanding immediate scrapping of the policy of 'reform', 'opening up' and 'globalisation of the economy' the memorandum referred to the earlier meeting on 4th of January, 1993 in which the UTUC (LS) had submitted concrete suggestions. But up till now neither the government nor the Finance Ministry did take into consideration any of the suggestions resulting in a far more dismal economic scenario as warned earlier by them and proving the government claim an utter falsehood.

The UTUC (LS) warned the government categorically of the dangerous consequences of its economic and industrial policies enunciated at the dictate of the IMF and the World Bank whose brand of free market economy, with liberalisation in trade and investment is delicensing, widescale privatisation, heavy subsidies and concessions in tax and duties to the capitalists especially the monopolists, policy of pricing and opening wide the door to the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in economic and industrial spheres. Comrade Chanda and Comrade Dutta also charged the government of pushing the country further into the debt-trap as it took massive amount of loans from the IMF and the World Bank, the imperialist financial bodies, on humiliating terms and conditions prejudicial to the interest of the country. These imperialist financial bodies have increasingly become the enforcer imposing privatisation, free trade and other new-colonial economic policies of world capitalism. In recent years it has been more and more revealed that the IMF stands as the iron fist in the velvet gloves of the major western industrialist countries.

The serious consequences of such policies have become more evident during the recent period in the economy.

Public Investment and Government Expenditure : Cuts in government expenditure and investment have considerably aggravated the economic and industrial crisis causing a basic change in the structure of demand for industrial production. With the introduction of this policy a quick-fire import liberalisation, insisted by the external creditors led by the IMF, has taken place.

Although the Government denies that the sharp cuts in public investments have been responsible for the slackening of demand for industry, the fact remains that there has been sharp fall in the investment rate in 1991-92 and 1992-93, the central government's capital expenditure which had been growing at the rate of 10.3% per annum between 1985-86 and 1990-91, has now come to an absolute decline of 21.3% in 1991-92 and 1992-93. As a result, like in other industries, in the cement industry also, government purchases have come down from about 40% to just 15% of the total output due to tapering off funds available for developmental and construction activities. Most cement manufacturers had to cut production by as much as 20%. Similarly curtailment of developmental activity has affected a large number of engineering industries. The Bharat Bhari Udyog Nigam Limited (a public sector engineering industry) is a unique case, where about 2,000 workmen were thrown out of employment through Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS) in six of its subsidiaries viz., Burn Standard, Jessops, Braithwaite, Bharat Process, Bharat Brakes & Valves. These companies had been suffering from want of orders which the Government has drastically curtailed and thus has forced the company to run with almost no production. The experts and many in the management feel that if the Government would have given the required funds for the working capital to these companies instead of the money required for VRS compensation, the companies could have run well. The ills are not due to 'any sickness' but due to the Government's policy of structural changes and curtailing expenditure as dictated by the IMF and the World Bank.

Recession : Major manufacturing industries are facing severe recession. Industries like automobiles, consumer electronics, steel ingots, alumi-

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Sugar, rice, wheat & petroleum price-hike condemned

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI said in a statement on 2nd February, 1994 :

"The Central Committee of the SUCI strongly protests against the decision of the Union Government to increase the issue price of wheat, rice and sugar, sold through the public distribution system to the extent of 20% and the prices of petrol and diesel just after the hike of LPG prices, and demands withdrawal of the same. The enhanced prices of petroleum products will further increase the prices of essential commodities and hike fares and transport charges. All this would hit hard the common people of our country who have already been bent low under the heavy burden of taxation and price-rise. The Central Committee also condemns the undemocratic way of hiking prices by administrative fiat."

Comrade Prithish Chanda brands the TU Bill a fraud and anti-labour

Calcutta, Jan.28 : Comrade Prithish Chanda, President, UTUC(LS), All India Committee and a member of Ramanujam Committee, has issued the following statement:

"It appears from a report published in a section of the Press today that the Central Cabinet has decided to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act and

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KARNATAKA

Movements led by SUCI evoke growing response

When people's life has touched an all time low and their miseries and apprehensions are multiplying under the impact of manifold intensified exploitation, when the cankerous evils of a rotten capitalist system keep spreading, threatening to burst into violent eruptions from time to time; when people's dreams of a better future, for a life of happiness and dignity lie shattered; when despair, frustration and cynicism threaten to engulf them, the numerous democratic mass movements that are growing in different parts of the country with the ultimate aim of conducting socialist revolution, provide a silver lining in the all-pervading

gloom. Today when united movement is the need of the hour; when repeated calls of our party for the same have gone in vain, it is indeed heartening to note that the attempts of our party, SUCI, to build up democratic movements on legitimate demands of the people single-handedly, have met with growing response and success.

Let us take the example of Karnataka, where 15 years ago a handful of dedicated young men and women set out to carry the thoughts of Com. Shibdas Ghosh deep into its soil. Right from its inception, the SUCI in Karnataka kept responding to the citizen's problems, but these attempts for

people's movement acquired a real mass character only in 1985, when the party developed a movement against increased bus fares. Party workers, including lady volunteers of the party, along with people played a valiant role and courted arrest. Finally the adamant government had to relent.

While many parts of Karnataka suffer from acute shortage of water causing untold suffering to the people, numerous projects for drinking water and irrigation gather dust, due to successive governments' negligence and corruption, which has been admitted even by the Irrigation Minister of

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UTUC (LS) demands scrapping of anti-people pro-monopoly policies

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nium, copper, cotton and jute textile, fertilizer, cement, some items of petro-chemicals and large segments of the electrical-engineering industries – have all suffered significant decline in output in the first half of 1992-93. And this trend is still going on, according to reports of the experts. These reports also suggest largescale stockpiling of finished goods in many industries which have fully confirmed the validity of the earlier criticism and warnings.

This policy of the government has only made the country more and more debt oriented, import oriented and deficit oriented.

The claimed growth rate has not yet shown any sign of improvement, rather gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate is today the half of what it was a few years back. The industrial recession brought in by the structural adjustment programme has further deepened. The index shows that during the first quarter of the current year industrial production grew by only 0.2%, which is worse than the growth of 1.5% in 1992-93. There is a negative growth in the mining sector. The manufacturing sector has grown only by 0.5% in the first half of the last year. Crude oil production has suffered a setback, all due to the same policy of the government.

Inflation : Sustained rise in inflationary trend has affected the life of the common people severely. During the last week of November, 1993 the rate of inflation, as measured by the wholesale price index, rose to 8.44%, recording its highest level in 45 weeks. Since this is based on provisional figures, which tend to underestimate the extent of price rise, the actual rate may be more than 9%. By now it must be somewhere in double digit. It has been experienced in the past that the revised estimates have always been higher than the provisional figure by as much as 1.3%. Viewed in this way and considering that price index has been going up week after week, it is clear that inflation rate is soaring much higher.

Normally, in India everybody has always experienced seasonal fall in the wholesale price index. But this year there is no seasonal fall nor any sign of lowering of the price of agricultural products in the market. The prices of every item of vegetable and other seasonal food items (agricultural) are very high even at this time of the year deviating from the usual trend. This has happened despite the fact that the monsoon this year has been very good, procurement has been more than satisfactory and there are ample food stocks with the government.

For this ever-increasing rate of inflation, continuous steep rise in prices and sluggish industrial growth, rather stagnation, the new economic policy of the Government is responsible which has liberalised everything, withdrawn all measures of checks and controls, given full liberty to both the industrial and agricultural rich.

The effect of this has come down heavily on the rural poor along with the industrial and urban poor. During the first year of introduction of the New Economic Policy in July 1991 i.e., upto July 1992, consumer prices for the agricultural workers increased by 20% and those for the industrial

workers by 13% as per UNDP report.

Taken 1980-81=100 as the base the wholesale price indices in October, 23, 1993 stand as below:

For all commodities - 250.00

Primary articles - 257.8

Food articles - 297.9

Non-food articles - 247.2

Fuel, power, lubricants - 254.3

Manufacturing products - 244.8

Food products - 251.6

Food index (computed) - 282.0

Cost of living indices

Industrial workers October 1993 – 256.0 (1982=100)

Agricultural labour – 1038.0 (July 1960-June 1961=100)

Foreign Direct Investment : In its new economic policy – liberalisation and opening up of the Government of India wanted the people believe that the country's economic health will be rejuvenated by inviting in a big way the foreign investment by the MNCs in our country. For that purpose the Finance Ministry claims to have 'debureaucratized' the process of granting approval to the foreign investors; and although foreign investment approval figures look impressive, they mainly remained on paper. Even according to economic experts who support this policy, whatever little is the actual inflow that, too, is trickling to undesirable channels. There is no investment yet in the infrastructure. Since July 1991, the Government of India upto September, 1993 has approved a long list of famous MNCs to invest in India totalling over Rs. 10,000 crores. Some of the famous names are Coca-Cola, IBM, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, British Gas, along with many more smaller ones. The Government of India which not so long ago had been thirsty for foreign exchange has now gone whole hog with this foreign direct investment (FDI) in our country. In the words of an academic economist it has been really a single-point programme since mid-1991 attracting higher foreign direct investment. Although no reliable estimates are available for actual inflow of foreign direct investment, yet various estimates show it to be around Rs. 1600 crores during the period July 1991-July 1993. The Minister of State for Finance told the Parliament during Monsoon Session this year that actual inflow of the FDI was estimated at Rs. 1,674 crores since the announcement of the policy. The Prime Minister Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao said in a speech at a FICCI meeting that as much as 87% of the investments approved were in high priority areas. It is known to all that 41% of the total investments approved are concentrated only in two sectors, i.e., petroleum and power. But the reality is that few of those investments which have been already approved have come in the 'priority areas' described by the Prime Minister. Rather the bulk of foreign investment has been in consumer goods and durables. And now our people find that Coca-Cola or chewing gum or Scotch whisky are the first to begin their operation in our country. Will the Finance Minister be fair enough as to spell out how India's economic problems are going to be solved? And how the people of the country will be benefited by Coca-Cola, chewing gum and whisky

? It has also been revealed that the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), the cell in the Prime Minister's Office set up 2 years ago to clear projects which do not qualify for automatic approval by the RBI and the Secretariat for Industrial Approvals (SIA), has rarely turned down any application. This is a serious departure from the policy of the past and it is now a matter of mere automaticity of FDI approval with little or no selectivity. Everything is welcome in almost every sector from industries like power, petroleum and telecommunication on the one hand, and on the other mineral water, aerated drinks, chewing gum and so on and so forth. This phenomenon certainly is not unknown to Finance Minister himself who has also admitted in a recent seminar that "projects like Coca-Cola are undesirable for the national economy, but it is a cost that the economy will have to bear". This is due to the pressure of the IMF and the foreign creditors, who never want India to grow strong industrially but want to have the vast Indian market as a looting ground. The government is offering more and more liberal and concessional terms to MNCs for obtaining more FDI. And in the process the government has signed Multi-lateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) providing for prompt and fair compensation in case of nationalisation of any foreign firm. The Prime Minister has announced in a recent meeting of FICCI that India soon will be signing bi-lateral guarantee agreement with the USA, the UK, South Korea, Germany etc. The government has also guaranteed 16% return in dollars to foreign countries in power sector.

External Debt : The Government of India is definitely pushing the country into the dangerous debt-trap. The UTUC (LS) has all along been protesting against such policy of taking loans from the IMF and the World Bank not on our terms but on their terms, and that too under abjectly humiliating conditionalities to satisfy the profit greed of the monopolists of our country and the MNCs. The external debt which was to the tune of Rs.1,29,000 crores in 1991 has shot up to Rs.227,417 crores in the current year. This will definitely aggravate the balance of payment (BoP) problem which again will lead to further debt.

Privatization : The UTUC (LS) has all through opposed the policy of privatization and the government has all along been trying to evade the issue by saying that it is not going to privatize the public sector undertakings. Here are a few instances where the government is forcing privatization.

(1) **Steel Industries :** IISCO, under the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), is being privatized and the report goes that it will be handed over to Mukand Iron & Steels. Despite largescale protest by the workers of IISCO, the management has already removed 5,000 workmen.

(2) **NTPC: Power Sector :** The NTPC in Farakka has been supplying electricity to Bihar and West Bengal. Bihar is taking power but not paying whereas West Bengal has stopped taking power from it because the government there has gone for new power installation with private industrialists.

(3) **DESU-Delhi :** It has been reported that the government has prepared for handing over the

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Mass Fronts Support Mexican Uprising

(In order to build up a countrywide movement against the retrograde economic and industrial policy of the central government the National Platform of Mass Organisations comprising various mass organisations of our country including the UTUC (LS) has been formed.)

New Delhi, 20.1.94 : While in their design for more fierce neo-colonial attack on the peoples of the world, the imperialist countries have been mouthing the virtues of multi-lateralism, and coercing the weaker countries to accept dangerous GATT rules, they, at the same time are forming selective groupings of nation states in rigid trade blocs because of the rabid rivalry between the imperialist powers for capturing as much market as possible. The North American Free Trade Agreements (NAFTA), comprising the USA, Canada and Mexico is one such bloc which would abolish all tariffs and other trade barriers over a decade on the goods traded between these three countries. Like Mr.P.V. Narasimha Rao, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico is also a votary of free market economy and this NAFTA is seen as a 'crowning success' of the Mexican President by the bourgeoisie of Mexico. While this NAFTA is bringing new prosperity to them, the impoverished peasants of South Mexico are however alarmed over the fallout of this trade bloc as it will bring disaster to the life and livelihood of the poor peasants. The poor peasants formed an army of National Liberation named after Emiliano Zapata, a hero of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, and organized an uprising in Chiapas, a southern city of Mexico. The Chiapas uprising sent a loud and unwelcome message to the Carlos Government supported by the Clinton administration, and their reactionary regime pounced upon the poor peasants with most sophisticated weapons in its hand.

Condemning the brutal attack on the Chiapas uprising, demanding immediate cessation of hostilities by the Mexican Government, releasing the patriots arrested and trial of the persons responsible for repression, the National Platform of Mass Organisations (NPMO) comprising various mass organisations of India, including the UTUC(LS), adopted a resolution on 7.1.94 in New Delhi. The full text of the resolution is given hereunder:

"We, the Platform of Mass Organisations, representing millions of Indian workers, agricultural labour, peasants, students, youth, women and tribal people, condemn the brutal attacks unleashed against the downtrodden peasants and indigenous people of the Chiapas region of Southern Mexico who have risen in opposition to the total disregard of people's rights by a government dependent on handouts of foreign bankers and unable to resist US arm-twisting. The recent uprising, led by a group of people who draw inspiration from a peasant leader of over half a century ago, Zapata, is a reminder that imperialism will continue to be resisted and be forced to retreat in the face of popular anger even in a so-called unipolar world, as is evident from events in West Asia and South Africa.

"The Platform demands that the Mexican Government immediately put a stop to the carnage it has unleashed against civilians and indigenous people, reverse its policies of national surrender, release the patriots it has arrested and try those

soldiers who have murdered innocent people in summary executions or bombed civilians going about their day-to-day work and punish them.

"The Platform further calls on the Indian people to express their solidarity with the Zapatista peasants and support their struggle against a Government committed to backing down before US bullying and selling out their country to the multinationals with utter disregard for the living standards of the mass of people through the North American Free Trade Agreements. Today there is a global threat to the sovereignty of states, the living standards of the working people and to international organisations like the UN, posed by cartels of international money lenders backing up multinationals and awakening outdated imperialist ambitions that can only bring the world to fresh disasters and wars. The Mexican uprising is one of the struggles to defeat these designs and we must defend it. Below are the members of the platform with their respective organisations.

1.Ashutosh Banerjee UTUC-LS, 2. R.K. Sharma, UTUC-LS, 3.Rajaji Mathew Thomas, AIYF, 4.Pallab Sengupta, AIYF, 5.D.D.Shastri, TUCC, 6. M K Pandhe, CITU, 7. Tapan Sen, CITU, 8. P K Ganguly, CITU, 9.Suraj Bhan Bharadwaj, CITU,10.PLSyal, AIBEA, 11.Brinda Karat, AIDWA. 12.Pramila Pandhe, AIDWA,13.Jaishanker, National Alliance of People's Movement,14. Ranjan Ganguly, AICCTU,15. Ram B Chauhan, AKS,16. D N Jha, Akhil Bharatiya Forward Bloc, 17. Dr.MC Vijay Chalawaa, AIYL, 18.Suneet Chopra, AIAWU. 19. N K Skukla, AIKS, 20. P K Tandon, AIKS, 21. G.Devrajan, AISB, 22.Indrajit Gupta, AITUC, 23. B D Joshi, AITUC,24. V.Tiagi, HMS, 25.Md.Salim DYFI,26.Bratin Sengupta, SFI, 27.Sujan Chakrabarty, SFI, 28.Abani Roy, UTUC, 29. K K Niyogi, AICCTU, 30.G Yallamanda Reddy, BKMU, 31. Y D Sharma, AIPWF

National Platform of Mass Organisations Plans

DEMONSTRATION BEFORE PARLIAMENT

New Delhi 10.01.1994 : This National Platform in its meeting held on 7th January evening decided for a programme of massive protest demonstration before Parliament on 5th April 1994, culminating the next phase of countrywide movement against the economic and industrial policies of the Government and acceptance of the Dunkel text by the Government of India.

The meeting was presided over by M. S. Krishnan, President of AITUC. It was attended by 32 representatives of the Central Trade Unions, National Federations and organisations of the peasantry, agricultural workers, students, youth and women.

The meeting reviewed the situation and noted with serious concern that despite the countrywide protest actions launched by the mass organisations which included two strikes and Bharat Bandh on 9th September and the massive rally at Delhi on 25th November 1992, the Government of India adamantly carried forward the implementation of the retrograde policies as per the conditionalities of the IMF. This had led to closures and joblessness, price rise and unemployment. Both the organised sector and the unorganised sector of industries were adversely affected, aggravating the unem-

ployment situation in the country. The peasants, agricultural workers and rural poor have been badly hit by this policy. The students, youth and women are also victims of these policies. The meeting reiterated the 20-point demands finalised by Delhi Convention of 15th April, 1992 and called upon the mass organisations to intensify the campaign in pursuance of those demands.

The meeting condemned the Government for agreeing to the Dunkel proposals. This would put our agricultural economy under the domination of the multinationals, undermine the public distribution system and increase the prices of drugs and pharmaceuticals several times.

The meeting further condemned the recommendations of the Malhotra Committee for handing over the Insurance industry to the private sector and the multinationals. The meeting warned the government against accepting the recommendations which would lead to opening up the flood-gates for entry of multinationals in the financial sector of the country. The acceptance and implementation of the policies under pressure from the IMF, World Bank and GATT threaten the interest of the country.

The meeting appealed to all the mass organisations to send copies of the resolutions stating that the Government of India should not ratify the Dunkel proposals.

The meeting decided to make widespread propaganda against the retrograde policies in concrete terms affecting different sections of people so that they are made fully aware of the dangerous consequences of these policies.

Under the above circumstances the meeting decided to carry forward the following countrywide action programme mobilising wider sections of the workers, peasantry, agricultural workers, students, youth, women and other professional and technical workers and the patriotic sections of the people to demand withdrawal of the policies :

1) Holding of local/district/state level conventions to further highlight the dangerous consequences of the economic policies and acceptance of Dunkel proposals by the government of India and to mobilise mass organisations for further actions.

2) Holding of local/district/state level demonstrations, meetings, jathas and rallies at state capitals to protest against these policies, demanding their reversal.

3) Organise sectional actions by various mass organisations at regional/area/state levels opposing these policies.

4) Organise massive protest demonstration before Parliament in New Delhi on 5th April 1994 against the policies of the government of India.

The meeting appeals to all mass organisations to be prepared for a longdrawn and sustained struggle till the policies are reversed. Without more militant and widespread struggles these policies cannot be defeated squarely.

The meeting also adopted a resolution congratulating the peasantry and the people of Mexico for their determined struggle against the NAFTA agreement. It expressed solidarity with their struggle and condemned the Mexican government for its brutal repression of the struggle.

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KARNATAKA

People rally round the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

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Karnataka, stating that 40% of the funds meant for irrigation have been misused. The Party has taken up the issue and conducted countless movements in different cities, including Bangalore, Bellary, Tumkur, Raichur and Mysore etc. and numerous villages in different talukas, that lent voice and life to thousands and thousands of people. Thus, for example, in 1987 the city of Gulbarga was stirred by a movement for water that lasted for three months. The movement drew even other organizations into its vortex. Finally the government had to bow down and apart from temporary measures also sanctioned a long term drinking water project that is now nearing completion due to protracted

Similarly, the movement for drinking water in Mysore which started in April 1982, drew into its ambit even old people and women in great numbers and has already achieved several of its demands.

In the last twelve years the AIDYO has gained certain significant achievements through various successful movements against obscene posters, movies, liquor shops and for filling of vacant posts in different establishments and on other demands of the people.

The Mahila Sanskritik Sanghatan (MSS), through their activities and movements, notably the movement against dowry, has gained people's admiration and attraction. To the MSS goes the noble credit of having created an atmosphere of democratic women's movement by tearing apart the all-pervading gloom of communal tension in the country, created by the destruction of the Babari Masjid, and over 20,000 women, arriving

marshalled into the streets that day burning out in bold protest against various burning problems in their life. This programme has lent a new vitality to women's movement and created hope and confi-

So far the party has also expressed its firm stand behind people through protest demonstrations against various attacks on them, be it in the national or international arena - including American attacks on Libya, Cuba and Iraq - and attacks on democratic rights and civil liberty, or against various black acts.

Our party in Karnataka has recently taken up a programme of massive people's convention, "Janandolana Samavesha" to launch an all-embracing democratic mass movement, while highlighting the burning problems of all sections of the toiling people of the state and seeking solution for the same. For that purpose a charter of 18 demands has been set up, that includes among others, the demand to: Bring down the prices of all essential commodities to the level of people's purchasing power... Take back Dunkel proposals in toto... Scrap New Education Policy, provide education to all... Scrap New Economic Industrial Policies; Withdraw privatization and modernization schemes; Ban retrenchment of workers... Curtail



Comrade Krishna Chakraborty along with Karnataka State leaders on the dais with Comrade K. Radhakrishna addressing at the Malleswaram Grounds on 7th January in Bangalore



A portion of the massive procession heading for Malleswaram Grounds.

Apart from these, different movements for other demands and amenities, organised in many places have met with varying degrees of success. These movements and protests have left an indelible impression in the minds of the conscious people and inspired them throughout the state to come out to the streets to fight on their own.

The valiant role played by the students and youth, needs mentioning too. Under the guidance of the party, the AIDSOS, have conducted countless movements and struggles on various educational problems, and against commercialization and curtailment of education, as well as against the evil of capitation fee, involving ever greater sections of students and more and more institutions, colleges and universities. The recent ruling of the Supreme Court on capitation fee clearly reveals the impact of the movement and is a great achievement, though not a full victory. Besides, these students' movements, based on higher culture and ethics and marching ahead with giant strides, have succeeded to dispel the wrong notion that student movement meant only vandalism and degeneration - a feeling created by the activities of the students' organizations of the ruling parties.

dence in the women that they would surely win in their battle against their problems.

Our party in Karnataka and its peasant organisation - the AIKKMS - have entered deep into life in the villages and even 'tribals' and more and more people from various castes and communities are rallying under its banner and have forged into one homogeneous force. The movements have now spread to different parts of the state and gathered strength. Thus the movement in 1990 for writing off loans of poor peasants, not only succeeded in bringing thousands of peasants into the path of struggle but also significantly achieved its demand.

In the past 10 years the party has also been active in organizing the workers under UTUC (LS) and the movements of workers are gaining in strength, braving all odds and following a path quite different from the opportunist trends followed by other trade union organisations.

Thus, the attempt to awaken and rouse the exploited masses and bring them into the arena of struggle is gaining momentum in Karnataka, facing all adversity. Today the stage is set for a state-wide movement.

police budget, increase education-health and social welfare budgets... Take stern measures against provocateurs of divisive tendencies such as casteism, communalism, regionalism, linguistic fanaticism, etc., Take measures to safeguard and extend secular, democratic rights, norms and values.

The "Janandolana Samavesha" or People's Convention held in Bangalore on January 7, was preceded by a two-month long preparatory campaign. In 18 out of 20 districts of Karnataka, countless meetings and literary campaign to mobilize the people met with great response and on the 7th January thousands and thousands of people from all walks of life, including peasants, workers, women, students and youths - a veritable sea of humanity - converged at Malleswaram grounds in Bangalore to attend the public convention.

Com. Krishna Chakraborty, Central Committee member of our party, who was the main speaker on the occasion, said that all these problems were the outcome of the existing capitalist system. The Congress(I) which is defending the interests of the capitalists, is not only anti-people but corrupt. Another party of the capitalists, the BJP, which is

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Janandolana Samavesha Death Anniversary of Lenin Observed in Bangalore in Assam

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projected as the alternative to the Congress(I), is raising the slogan of Hindutva, not because of its love for the people but for the sake of power. He called upon the people not to fall victim to casteism-communalism but to fight against all the problems of the people unitedly and ultimately establish a socialist system, rooting out this exploitative system.

Com. K. Radhakrishna, State Secretary, SUCI, Karnataka, who presided over the meeting said that this convention is a landmark in the history of Karnataka people's movement. Criticizing the government's anti-people attitude he said even after 46 years of independence people have not even got basic facilities like education, health, employment, civic amenities etc. The present government, instead of solving the problems of the people is busy with internal squabbles for power. He called upon the people to spread the message of this convention and to fight against the twin dangers of new economic-industrial policy and communalism.

Resolutions seeking solutions for the burning problems of all sections of people were unanimously accepted in the convention.

The call of this convention by the party has reached far and wide and created great enthusiasm among the masses, and will go a long way in strengthening mass movement against the anti-people policies of both the Central and state governments, on the one hand, and creating a counter-current against the conspiracy to divide the unity of the people.

Mass Meeting in Trivandrum

Trivandrum Jan. 6: As part of democratic mass movement against the anti-people policies of both the Central and State government, the Trivandrum District Committee of our party in Kerala, organised a public meeting at Gandhi Park maidan, Trivandrum on 4th January, 1994.

Com. Krishna Chakraborty, Central Committee member, SUCI, was the main speaker and spoke at length on the current international and national situation. In a detailed analysis he showed that only mighty mass movements, developed on the basis of higher morality and ethics and with the correct base political line of anti-capitalist socialist revolution, can lead the exploited masses to emancipation. For building up country-wide mass movement, a principled unity of all left and democratic parties is the need of the hour, he stressed. It is a pity that the big left parties are indulging in opportunistic parliamentary games instead of building up mass movements. Victory of casteist forces in the Assembly elections held recently in the Northern States, has been possible only in the absence of strong democratic mass movement sweeping the country against anti-people Congress(I) and communal BJP for which parties like CPI(M) and CPI bear responsibility.

Com. B.K. Rajagopal presided over the meeting. Com. C.K. Lukose, State Secretary, SUCI, also spoke. The meeting was enthusiastically attended by a large number of people.

Guwahati, Jan. 22: Paying homage to Comrade V. I. Lenin, the great Marxist thinker, philosopher, teacher and guide, on the occasion of his 70th death Anniversary at a meeting held under the auspices of the Assam State Committee of the SUCI at Gauri Sadan Hall on 21st January, Comrade Asit Bhattacharjee, the Central Committee member of the party, stressed the critical political situation prevailing in the state because of the preaching of divisive ideas in the state since the days of Assam movement in the name of seeking identity. The practice of divisive politics had reached such a pass that the existence of the State of Assam was at stake today, he said. The so-called votaries of autonomy were demanding mini-state status for all of them and posing this pernicious separatist theory as a 'revolutionary' one, whereas Lenin, on the contrary, has taught us that development does not lie in seeking 'exclusiveness' but in voluntary assimilation, not in carving out land for which there exists no real need but in breaking national barrier in order to hasten the process of all-out intercourse and intermixing.

Successful Students' Conference in AP

The Andhra Pradesh Second Students' Conference, organised with a spirit of mass movement, by the AIDS O was held with a grand success at Hyderabad on 16th and 17th December last. On 16th December, the day of the Open Session, a well-decorated student demonstration started from Hussain Sagar Jaladrushyam and passing through the main roads of the city reached Sultan Bazar, the meeting place, where common people also gathered.

The meeting started with the garlanding of martyrs' column by Prof. G. Haragopal, General Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Save Education Committee, and Comrade Rabin Samajpati, General Secretary, AIDS O. The Telugu version of *Tasks Ahead of the Students and Youth*, a booklet on the celebrated speech of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great Marxist thinker, was released in the meeting by Comrade Samajpati.

In his inaugural speech Prof. Haragopal called upon the students to shatter the hypocrisy of the ruling class regarding education by mounting pressure on the government through movements for universal education. He condemned the government for hike in fees and commercialisation of education and also for signing the Dunkel Draft which would discourage the fundamental research in science and cause brain drain.

Comrade K. Sridhar, Secretary, AP State Committee of the SUCI, the chief guest, strongly criticised the so-called 'new industrial and economic policies' of the Centre. The ruling class and its parties, the Cong(I) and BJP in particular, were fanning up communal, casteist and other fratricidal strifes in order to disrupt their unity, he said.

Comrade Dipankar Roy, Vice-President, AIDS O, said that the National Policy on Education-86, designed to grow a fascist bent of mind was an onslaught on education, culture and civilisation. Here the AIDS O is the lone crusader

as our repeated appeals to SFI and AISF fell on deaf ears.

Comrade Ramesh Patnaik, President, AP, AIDS O, thoroughly criticised the Bhaskar Reddy-led state government for a staggering 15 time hike in fees at one stroke in the engineering and polytechnic education. Comrade S. Govinda Raiulu, the state AIDS O Treasurer, proposed the vote of thanks.

The Delegate Session was held at the Press Club on 17th December. Comrade Samajpati hoisted the AIDS O flag and Comrades K. Sridhar, Samajpati and Patnaik garlanded the portrait of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh at the beginning. After Comrade K. Sridhar's inaugural speech Comrade Samajpati, the main speaker, said that the workers and the exploited in order to free themselves from the shackles of capitalist exploitation cultivate truth, whereas the exploiters in order to perpetuate their rule indulge in lies and falsehood and distort history. He appealed to the students to foil this evil design. Two separate resolutions were unanimously adopted condoling the death of Comrade Sailu, an AIDS O leader, who was brutally murdered by BJP backed anti-socials, and the death of Rachakonda Viswanatha Sastri (Ravi Shastri), eminent litterateur, who was the member of the reception committee of this conference. The political resolution moved by Comrade G. Sreedhar and supported by Comrade S. Govinda Raiulu was also unanimously adopted. Comrade B.S. Amarnath, State Secretary, AIDS O, moved the organisational report. Separate resolutions on communalism and obscenity were also adopted.

A sixteen-member powerful State AIDS O Council was elected with Comrade Ramesh Patnaik as President, Comrade B.S. Amarnath as Vice-President, Comrade S. Govinda Raiulu as Secretary and Comrade G. Sreedhar as Treasurer. The meeting ended with the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

SUCI Memorandum to PM on Burning Problems of Assam

Guwahati, Jan. 21: On the occasion of the visit of the Prime Minister to Assam, a memorandum was submitted to him on behalf of the Assam State Committee of the SUCI.

The memorandum strongly demanded that the Central Government should immediately evolve a concrete blueprint for setting up of specific industries in Assam on the basis of available raw materials and announce it in no time, and for that matter, the imperative task of development of necessary infrastructure should be taken up in right earnest. The utterly backward communication system and the shocking state of power generation was pointed out. More railway network and electrification of railways were demanded.

In order to allay the apprehension of the Assamese speaking people about their linguistic and cultural identity in view of the fast changing composition of population the memorandum demanded that the Central Government should immediately initiate measures to make the present official language status of Assamese permanent either through amendment of the Constitution or by adoption of a special resolution in the Parliament in no way making it linked up with the change

(Contd. on page 8)

Movement in Kanoria Jute Mill

Be The Workers Victorious

The ruling circle, the owners and their lackeys have long been accusing the workers and employees, particularly in this state of West Bengal under the 'Left Front' rule, for 'unrest in industry' and industrial breakdown in the state. But at last recently the unprecedented struggling revolt of the jute mill workers of the Angus, Hastings, and particularly of the Victoria and Kanoria jute mills against the unlimited fraud and all types of misdeeds and oppression of the mill owners in connivance with established big trade unions and the government has nakedly exposed the above propaganda ploy and exploded the myth of 'peace in industry' under 'Left Front' rule. The ruling circle and the monopoly controlled Press are now greatly alarmed. In the meantime, the workers of Hastings Jute Mill have come out triumphantly through joint movement in which Bengal Jute Mill Workers' Union (BJMWU) affiliated to UTUC (Lenin Sarani) played the leading role. Previously the starving workers of Victoria Jute Mill of Telinipara ransacked the office of management and they did not even spare the leadership of the established big trade unions like the CITU, INTUC and others who have been signing black agreements with the owners masquerading as protectors of workers' interest. Recently the workers of Kanoria Jute Mill broke open the factory gate under lock-out defying the betrayer union leaders and captured the factory to continue production. Workers and employees of these jute mills are still continuing their heroic struggle and both the BJMWU and UTUC(LS) have expressed their full support to and solidarity with the struggling workers of these jute mills while other unions directly put on the dock by the workers are trying to escape the situation this way or that. UTUC(LS) has demanded of the Central and State Governments to take immediate steps for reopening the Kanoria Jute Mill. It has also urged the State Government to talk with the leadership of the newly formed 'Sangrami Sramik Union' for settling the issue forsaking all anti-worker legalistic pleas and formalities. Also, in an open letter on 30th December, 1993, Comrade Provash Ghosh, West Bengal State Secretary of our party, urged the Chief Minister Mr Jyoti Basu to take effective steps to reopen the closed jute mills and particularly to talk with the leadership of SSU of Kanoria Jute Mill.

We also express our wholehearted support to the cause of the Kanoria Jute Mill workers. But while continuing their present struggle steadfastly the workers and employees of Kanoria Jute Mill should also deeply ponder over some important aspects involving this undaunted protest of theirs against the machinations of big central trade unions, the owners and the government. Sensing widespread support of all section of common people – workers, employees, peasants, students, youths and intellectuals – to this outburst of the starving workers against the owners, the government and particularly against the betrayal of the big ruling party dominated unions, the vested class and their press and government media have jumped at the issue and have overnight posed as pro-working class. Yet in an orchestrated way they are fanning up an anti-politics and even an anti-trade union psychology among the workers and toiling people in general.

But the workers and employees must not forget

that their own organisation, that is trade union, is the only weapon in their hands without which they can never save themselves from the day-to-day injustice and onslaughts of the employers. Trade union movement can in no way be held responsible for the treachery of any particular trade union. It is the character and politics of a particular trade union that are responsible for letting down the workers' interest and around such unions, in most of the cases, working people, without judging their character and politics, easily throng being attracted by their size and 'strength', governmental backing and capacity to bring forth some immediate relief or concession, but ultimately betraying their interest. The workers can judge the character of such unions only with the help of their own political consciousness. The case of Kanoria workers is an eye opener to this truth. The big and established unions affiliated to CITU, INTUC, BMS and the like – true to their bourgeois or petty-bourgeois class character – completely let down the workers' interest there.

Secondly, the idea of trade union minus politics is simply an illusion, a philistine propaganda and total humbug. Each and every trade union, be it an isolated single union or affiliated to any central trade union, however much it may boast of its apolitical character, must have some politics, knowingly or unknowingly. Only the owners, the exploiters and their spokesmen preach this idea of trade unionism without politics and a good section of common people falls prey to it due to lack of their socio-political consciousness or due to utter frustration. In a class divided society where the owning class holds all the economic-political-social-cultural weaponry to perpetuate this system, where the very system is based on the exploitative relations of production, to give sermons to the workers or the common people to shun politics is synonymous with asking them to silently yield to accept the politics of the rulers and exploiters. Workers must not forget that the slogan of 'no politics' is also a politics – the politics of *status quo*, the politics of vested interests. In West Bengal, the CPI(M) and CITU leadership under the garb of 'protecting the Left Front Government' and for that matter 'keeping peace in industry' have all along taught the workers and employees the politics of class collaboration and have practically led them to serve the interest of the owners and employers. The jute mill workers of this state are the worst victims of that sort of nasty politics and trade unionism.

Thirdly, in their attempt to capture the locked-out mill and running the production independently there is, no doubt, a frantic effort of the Kanoria workers to survive; but some interested circles are branding it as 'the only and right way to survive' and 'real alternative in trade union movement' and the like. On the other hand, some big established trade unions, frightened to lose their vested interests, are jeering at the Kanoria workers saying, 'pooh! they are destined to succumb!' That is, they cherish the workers' defeat the other way round.

But victory has to be achieved by the workers of Kanoria Jute Mill. And for that matter they need to deeply think over the above aspects of their movement. To capture the factory and carry on production independently by the workers and thereby to set up pressure on the owner and the

erring government – if it be the objective of the workers then it is all right. But if they think it to be 'the alternative way', 'the only way to survive' or 'workers ownership over the means of production' then they will be completely mistaken. In a class divided capitalist society, like ours, the whole process of production, beginning from supply of capital and raw material to marketing the finished goods is absolutely controlled and governed by the capitalist class and its state machine. In such a situation, isolatedly taking over one or two, even say, a few hundreds of factories, will never automatically mean abolition of the laws of capitalistic production and market operation. Not only the question of production and marketing, in a capitalist state everything starting from police, administration, judiciary to military serve and constantly protect the capitalist class interest. So workers' rule is not established simply by taking over a few factories by the workers. If it had been that easy then the question of establishing working class state through revolution, that is, destruction of bourgeois state machine would have never arisen. And practically speaking, participation of the workers in management ruled by the capitalist system ultimately and invariably makes those workers' representatives the tools of exploitation by the owners and employers. History has proved it to the hilt.

What is needed is the correct way, the correct political line behind the movement and only a trade union led by correct revolutionary politics can provide such a way. It is the duty of such trade unions to stand by the struggling workers and organize them along right path; likewise, should not the workers also in the interest of their honour, dignity and rights distinguish such trade union leadership from others? Otherwise, however much be their emotion and sacrifice, without correct path and without correct leadership, can victory be ultimately achieved? And in such case of failure due to wrong leadership, frustration may engulf them in no time.

Today the jute workers' movement must be directed against the government which is nakedly allowing the jute mill owners to cut wages, default in depositing workers' PF and ESI contributions, usurp the workers' money for investing in speculative money market and even to close down factories and sell them out at their will. To evade its responsibility of punishing the offending mill owners, the 'Left Front' Government is taking shelter in legalism and is going hand in glove with the arch reactionary Central Government. If the 'Left Front' Government had the least pro-working class attitude it would not have taken resort to legality instead of legitimacy on question of punishing the guilty owners during these 17 years of their rule.

Lastly, we appeal to the jute mill workers and employees of the state, particularly of Kanoria Jute Mill, to build up broadest possible unity among themselves and united protracted movement to compel the owners and the government to concede to their legitimate demands including immediate reopening of the closed and locked-out mill. Again, it is our appeal to the Kanoria workers that such unity with the central trade unions must be built up; otherwise, would it be possible for them to continue any sustained and protracted movements in the face of onslaughts of the inimical governments and the owner in isolation from the ongoing trade union and mass movements in the state and country as a whole? Without it, we deeply apprehend, their sacrifices and revolting zeal may ultimately be lost again in a quagmire of careerist trade unionism.

UTUC (LS) (Contd. from page 2) Hastings Jute Mills

Workers snatch significant victory

DESU fully or the distribution job of it to some private company. Now, similar privatization is going on in the oil sector also. Right from oil drilling to refinery, private companies are being brought in.

A modest estimate shows that 3 million workers are already out of employment from the industrial units alone. Many of the sick industrial units are viable and could be turned healthy if only the government comes out to help them financially and the bank credits are made available to them. But the government has thrown them on the streets by refusing help.

Dunkel Draft: The UTUC(LS) wants to reiterate its earlier stand and strongly urges the government to reject the proposal and refuse to sign the GATT Agreement on their terms.

The UTUC(LS) strongly holds that (i) Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) would have a negative effect on Indian agriculture; (ii) The Government of India should not surrender its options for asking for re-negotiations in the Dunkel Draft; (iii) The acceptance of Dunkel Draft as such would mean a grave setback to India's self-reliant economic growth; (iv) Dunkel Proposals would put serious obstruction on India's efforts to enter critical branches like seed production, food processing, drugs, energy, foodstock, chemicals and branches of industrial bio-technology; (v) Though the government had already granted unhindered market access to foreign big companies and MNCs detrimental to the interest of our country and the people, even then it failed to acquire at least some degree of technology transfer. Hence, the UTUC(LS) demands that the government should revise its policy in this regard and totally reject the Dunkel Proposals instead of hiding the truth from the people by saying that there are some beneficial aspects in the proposal.

Comrade Pritish Chanda and Comrade Tapas Dutta in the memorandum strongly demanded (i) revision of the taxation policy of the Centre (both direct and indirect) so that the common men can to a great extent get relief and the rich – the industrial and commercial houses and the big companies – could be forced to pay direct taxes more and more; (2) introduction of agricultural tax to be imposed on rural rich agriculturists; (3) introduction of effective means and machinery to stop tax evasion and unearth black money which is running a parallel economy – and thus the government can strengthen its resources; and (4) to check inflation and stabilise the price line.

Apart from other speakers representing their TUs, Comrade Chanda spoke on behalf of the UTUC (LS). He vehemently lashed at the anti-people and pro-monopoly policies of the Narasimha Rao government and demanded immediately to discard the policies and wanted to hear the decision of the Finance Minister. Strangely enough the finance minister did not comment anything. Rather showing dearth of time he left the meeting in a haste. In the previous meeting held on 4th January last year also he did the same thing. It is clear from his moves that he wants to create an impression among the people that whatever he is doing he is doing it in consultation with his opponents even. But the fact speaks to the contrary. But stranger is the role played by other Trade Unions including the CITU whose leaders after criticising the various aspects of the government policy virtually allowed the policies to go unopposed judged by at least what transpired from the concluding part of their speech.

For every despondent worker anywhere in our country the determined struggle of 5,500 workers of Hastings Jute Mill in Rishra of Hooghly district, West Bengal, is an event of profound lesson. The workers led a 100-day battle that ended in victory. The victory can easily be gauged in terms of the demand achieved, but its significance lies deeper. It exemplifies how the working class politics can inflict defeat on the politics of the exploitative capitalist class and even in the present situation of the owners' unbound savagery, they can be restrained.

The news of this victory has been blacked out by the monopolist media or has been undermined, while on the other hand, such news is being highlighted as deepens the feeling against trade union movement, a feeling that comes as a consequence of the treachery of the so-called trade unions, particularly the established ones.

But what a real trade union can do, that is not only struggling but is also armed with revolutionary politics, is proved by the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) by its remarkably uncompromising role, especially in the Hastings Jute Mill. Let it be mentioned here that the UTUC (LS) enjoys the support of the majority workers in the mill and yet it is the same trade union organisation that led the united movement at Hastings, for today united movement is the historic necessity.

When in September '93 the Bangurs, a top monopoly house, hatched a conspiracy to lock out the Hastings, the UTUC (LS) and all other 10 unions, including the reluctant CITU, started a resistance movement. As a result the mill owner stepped back.

But the Bangurs had been waiting for a plea. When on 3rd October, misguided by some CITU leaders, about only 30 workers of the selection department suddenly started producing below their quotas, the owners grabbed the opportunity and locked out the mill on 8th October. Judging the whole situation does not this question rightly arise that the lock out was a result of the connivance of the CITU and the Bangurs?

For the last 12 years the CITU has been playing the same role of compromise and collaboration. Previously there had been onslaughts on the workers in different sectors like jute, cotton textile, etc. But since 1982 the onslaught became absolutely vicious and retrenchment, increased workload, severe wage cut, DA freeze, replacement of permanent jobs with a system of producing by unrecorded workers, known as 'benamwala', defalcation of crores of rupees from PF, ESI, gratuity, bonus, etc., have become a common feature. The workforce in jute industry has been reduced from 2.5 lakhs in 1982 to only 1.5 lakhs at present.

But total production has increased. Thanks to the unwavering slavery of the CITU and the INTUC, who mean just a few one-day or two-day strikes, some demonstrations etc. as their form of movement.

But the only jute mill, where every onslaught on the workers has successfully been resisted was the Hastings Jute Mill. In this whole period of 12 years no retrenchment, no wage cut, no misappropriation of workers' fund, no system of production by benamwala, etc., could be imposed on the workers. Another example of struggle in Hastings we like to note here. This is about the so-called BIFR Package. Although BIFR appears in the garb of a so-

called package ostensibly to save industries from liquidation it strikes terror among workers. If any concern suffers loss for two consecutive years, the central government comes in to its rescue. Capitalists deliberately misappropriate crores of rupees taken from banks as loans and usually they never pay interest, let alone repaying the principal amount. In a shameless got up game, a particular industry then is referred to the BIFR as sick industry. The BIFR then saves that industry from liquidation by liquidating workers and not punishing the offending capitalists. The workers are retrenched in huge number, their wage and other funds cut, work load increased and thus they are ruined.

Many industries have gone into the grip of the BIFR unopposed due to the support of the CITU, INTUC and other trade unions, who uphold the so-called package.

But the Hastings Jute Mill owned by the Bangurs, referred to BIFR as a sick concern, could not be taken over despite the winding order for the stiff resistance of the UTUC (LS).

All these struggles stress the necessity of trade union movement on the basis of a correct politics conducive to anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Or else, a workers' outburst either with an apolitical air or centring some prominent individual, or with a bias against trade union movement as such will lead surely and inevitably to degeneration, a truth that has been proved, although painfully, in our country and abroad again and again.

The Bangurs gave the following conditions, for lifting the lockout - retrenchment of 650 workers, retirement of 300 others, no more recruitment against retirement, 2-3 times increase of workload, abolition of canteen, tiffin break, system of rest for workers coming from distant places, etc., etc.

The workers stood unitedly against these black conditions, demanded unconditional withdrawal of the lock-out and started the protracted battle.

The unions repeatedly urged the labour ministry, the labour commissioner and other concerned government departments to hold a tripartite meeting and to compel the owners for a legitimate solution. But the CPI(M)-led LF government did nothing. Rather the minister, the labour commissioner (LC) and other officials always urged for a bipartite settlement with the owners by accepting the black terms and conditions. For, otherwise, they argued, the mill would not open at all.

So in the meeting of 18.12.93 participated by all the unions, including the CITU forced by the workers, a set of programmes was thrashed out. It was decided, among others, to call Rishra Bandh on 21.12.93. But the CITU made a sudden turn-about. On the day of bandh the CITU opposed it blatantly by circulating handbills and forsook the united platform. They did not participate in the joint protest demonstration on 22.12.93 before IJSO, the headquarters of the jute mill owners in Calcutta.

The CITU, the owners and the government thought that like in other industries the workers of the Hastings too would be demoralised and accept their fate lying down. But here united movement, instead, grew stronger. The workers repeatedly gheraoed the D.L.C., courted arrests violating 144 CrPC, organised large demonstrations to the Serampore SDO, the D.M., D.L.C. with all their

(Contd. on page 8)

Assam SUCI Memorandum to PM

(Contd. from page 5)

in the pattern of population maintaining at the same time the constitutional rights of all big or small linguistic minorities.

The memorandum demanded withdrawal of army and stressed that instead of military approach to the problem, the government should immediately initiate effective measures to enter into serious discussions with the leaders of the ULFA movements to reach a negotiated settlement.

The memorandum pointed out to the Prime Minister the grim plight likely to result from the latest decision of the Election Commission, nullifying the entire process of intensive revision of voters' list and ordering another special revision at the instance of chauvinists and communal forces, and urged him to ensure the voting rights of all the genuine Indian citizens.

With respect to controversy regarding the proposed Central University in Barak Valley, the memorandum decried chauvinist force's orchestrated campaign against it and urged to intervene to hammer out an effective and just solution to the satisfaction of all concerned, taking into consideration the sentiments of different sections of the people.

HASTINGS

Correct leadership alone can protect workers' interest

(Contd. from page 7)

family members. Almost the whole of Rishra was roused to the battle and every member of every worker family turned a soldier. The women organised a separate platform and the students formed a Student Morcha. The movements spread like a wild fire with every passing day.

And finally on 4th January the workers held sit-in demonstrations at LC's office in Calcutta. The pitch of the movement frightened the administration. On 10th January the government was compelled to convene a tripartite meeting. In the next meeting on 13.1.94 the workers with their families started demonstrating before the LC office. The hired men of the owners tried every bit to foil this determined demonstration but failed. At 10 in the night the news arrived that the very next day, i.e. on 14th January, the Labour Minister himself would sit with the Bangurs and on 19th January the LC would convene the final tripartite meeting.

The final tripartite meeting in Calcutta was a memorable one. The workers with their family members made a huge contingent of army, gheraoed the LC office and declared that they would not disperse till the final victory, come what may.

The owners at last were compelled to yield. They withdrew the illegal lock-out unconditionally. And further, not a single anti-labour condition would be implemented.

After the mill was declared open on 19th January, a victory meeting was organised at the Hastings Jute Mill. Comrade Fatick Ghosh, President, UTUC(LS), West Bengal State Committee, present as the main speaker, hailed the victorious workers.

He showed how the capitalists, aided and abetted by the CPI(M)-led 'Left Front' Government, had unleashed severe assault on the workers, particularly since 1982. The CITU and the INTUC took to such show of movement as would neither embarrass the government nor the industrialists. The vested interest wanted to confine all movements within legal limits, so that the workers could ultimately swallow all draconian measures. But though this treacherous role frustrated the workers to a large extent, it cannot be permanent. Workers had reached the limit of tolerance and were exploding.

But, Comrade Ghosh pointed out, no spontaneous outbursts would help. A conscious protracted united movement on the basis of correct politics and higher ethics was to be unleashed to give defeat to the owner-government-opportunist TU leadership combine. The correct leadership was the vital question and along with it volunteer Corps and workers' committees were to be formed as instruments of struggle. Comrade Fatick Ghosh called upon the workers to build up uncompromising battle on this working class political line, as had been exemplified by the struggling workers of the Hastings Jute Mill.

UTUC(LS) on Recent Coal Mine Disaster

Calcutta, Jan. 30 : The shocking news of the mining disaster that claimed 56 lives in New Kenda Colliery of Asansol-Ranigunge Coal belt of West Bengal on 26th January last reached the UTUC(LS) when its All India General Council was in session. The General Council in an immediate resolution expressed its deep condolence and demanded of the Government of India to set up a Court of Enquiry under the provisions of the Mines Act to identify the causes and find out the persons actually responsible for the disaster as well as to pay adequate compensation to the family members of the deceased and the injured. The resolution strongly criticised the Government of India for winding up the Department of Mines Rescue and transferring the task of mine's safety to the mine managements who are grossly violating the safety provisions.

Comrade Tapas Dutta, General Secretary, UTUC(LS) expressed his deep anguish over the report that the miners were operating in shafts with a dangerous carbon monoxide level of 800 PPM, four times over the normal level. Miners were compelled to operate underground without 'Self-rescue Kits' and telephone connections with the pit-head both of which is a must for their safety. All those are criminal negligence on the part of the management and those criminals must be severely punished, Comrade Dutta claimed.

The West Bengal State Committee of UTUC(LS) observed 29.1.94 as the 'Protest Day' against the criminal negligence of the Central Government in mines safety exposed in the New Kenda diaster. On this occasion, a big meeting of workers and employees was held in Calcutta. Similar protest meetings were also held on the day at different parts of the state.

Orissa RBI Casual Workers Achieve Victory

Bhubaneswar, Jan. 30 : Reserve Bank of India, Bhubaneswar, around 80 casual labourers were rotting for the last 12 to 15 years without

being absorbed as regular employees of the bank. These hapless workers besides being exploited by the bank were forced to attend to domestic chores of senior executives of the bank. No union, be it BEFI or AIBEA which are recognised trade unions of the Bank Management, came to their rescue.

Ultimately, to work with dignity the casual workers organised themselves under the banner of Reserve Bank Casual Workers' Union, affiliated to UTUC(LS). Under the guidance of UTUC(LS) the workers waged a heroic and relentless struggle to achieve their legitimate right through different agitational programmes and legal fights in the Orissa High Court and recently achieved victory forcing the management to absorb around 70 persons.

Students protest against increase in bus fare in Haryana

At the call of AIDS0 thousands of students from all over Rewari district in Haryana took to the streets on 13 December last in protest against a steep hike in the rates of their concessional bus passes, obtained in the past through protracted struggle by the student community in the state. This hike would be an impediment for students from rural areas coming to educational institutions in urban areas. Discontent among the student community was simmering for long against the hike in prices of exercise books, and fees in educational institutions. The students sent a memorandum to the Chief Minister demanding to immediately withdraw the anti-education, anti-student policies and decisions of the state government commensurate with the new economic policies followed by the central government.

Comrade Chanda Condemns TU Bill

(Contd. from page 1)

claimed that it is doing so on the basis of the Ramanujam Committee recommendations. As a member of the said committee, I like to state that the committee was sharply, evenly and vertically divided over its recommendations. Hence, we protest the distortion of the fact by the Central Cabinet.

"Secondly, we strongly feel that the proposed revision, viewed in totality, is retrograde direction and is sought in response to the necessity of the monopoly capitalists at home and abroad, who have been pressurising the government for such revision for smooth implementation of the new economic and industrial policy. The Bill seeks to strike a blow against the right of the workers to organise and ensure administrative interference in the internal affairs of the Union as well as to force the workers to adopt check-off system which empowers the employers to directly interfere in Trade Union activity and to develop unions of their own choice.

"We demand unconditional withdrawal of the Bill and call upon the working people of the country to stand in defence of their Trade Union rights. We also call upon the Government of West Bengal to withdraw its long-pursued policy, of not allowing registration to a union having less than 10% of membership, which has encouraged the government of India in adopting such measure through proposed amendment."

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