

**39th Session of AITUC
Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala)**

March, 2009

**Important Documents, Resolutions,
Reports, List of Functionaries**

Rs. 100/-

AITUC Publication

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Foreword

On entering the 89th year of its foundation, the premier national trade union centre of the Indian Working Class, All India Trade Union Congress, conducted its 39th National Session in the capital of Kerala, Tiruvananthapuram from 2nd to 5th December, 2008.

The session commenced with a huge Mass Rally participated by over one and half lakh workers-men and women, organised and unorganised, youth and veterans-drawn from all states and territories of India, culminating at Chittaranjan Nagar. The city of Tiruvananthapuram was flooded with red arches, red bunting, red flags, decorations, welcome displays, red everywhere.

The Conference adopted a "Declaration on Future Action," including a massive March to Parliament in Feb. 2009 against the job losses, wage cuts and drastic adverse effects on account of the financial crisis, the inevitable consequences of neo-liberal market economy.

Five commissions viz (1) Unorganised Workers (2) Strengthening the organisation (3) Social Security (4) Women workers and (5) Task of the working class in the present situation, deliberated upon the various aspects and came out with recommendations, to be further pursued by the AITUC in the coming period. Top leaders of the AITUC led these commissions.

Two Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Four delegates, most of whom are of the working class origin, deliberated based on the comprehensive report placed by the General Secretary and enriched the report further. This was also supplemented by a Report on International situation and struggles. Maximum delegates were in the forefront of the struggles, besides being better qualified, educationally/technically.

A galaxy of international delegates, Com. George Mavrikos, General Secretary of World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), Dy. Director of International Labor Organization (ILO) Mr. Andre Bogui, fraternal delegates from Greece, Sudan, Vietnam, Lab Country/Spain, Cyprus, Nepal (Conep & NTUF), Australia, Sri Lanka (CFTU & PSS),

Syria, South Africa (COSATU) Bangladesh (BTUC & BNC), Malaysia greeted the AITUC conference, while messages from ACFTU China, CTC Cuba, GCTP (Portugal), APFUTU Pakistan, Zenroren (Japan), GFTUK DPR Korea, TUF of Kazakhstan wishing the success of the conference.

The top fraternal national trade union leaders, Coms. N.K. Pandhy CITU, Thampan Thomas HMS, Radhakrishna AIUTUC, Kumaraswamy AICCTU, Tiwari TUCC, M.S. Karunakar BMS & Ramachandran Nair INTUC greeted the conference in the opening session.

Enthusiastic and effective participation of the delegates was evident as several Resolutions on various important topics were deliberated upon and adopted. They included (1) Special Resolution on "Mumbai Terror Attack" (2) National Minimum Wage (3) Price Rise (4) Unorganised Sector Workers Social Security Bill (5) Ratification of ILO Core Conventions (6) Against Regional Chauvinism, Communalism and Terrorism (7) Against Economic sanctions, boycott and imperialist aggression, (8) Against outsourcing and privatisation in Defence Sector (9) Banking Industry (10) Against FDI in Insurance Sector (11) Power Sector (12) State Government Employees' Struggle (13) Supporting anti-POSCO struggle (14) Coastal Management Zones (15) National Policy on Road Transport (16) Sugar Workers Struggle (17) Against Privatisation of Hutti Gold Mines etc.

On the eve of the historic Conference, Seminars and Cultural events were organised by the Reception Committee such as Womens' Conference on 29th Nov, Media Seminar on 30th November, Exhibition of AITUC History on 1st Dec., Poets meet on 1st Dec., Cultural meet on 3rd Dec., Seminar on Nuclear Deal & National Security on 4th December, besides cultural events by IPTA. Manipur, KPAC, Tribal Arts.

The 39th Session of AITUC become yet another historic event in the annals of the Indian Working Class movement, the evidence of which was witnessed in the Massive March to Parliament on the 18th Feb. in which several thousands of AITUC cadres overwhelmingly participated. It has paved a glorious path for the future militant struggles of the working class of India, in order to change the structure and social order of the crisis ridden society.

(H. Mahadevan)
Dy. General Secretary

**AITUC
39th National Conference
Thiruvananthapuram
Programme**

**29th November to 5th December, 2008
(as published by the Reception Committee)**

29th NOVEMBER, 2008

**Women's Conference
P.Bhaskaran Nagar (VJT Hall)**

4 P.M.

Welcome : P.Vijayamma
Chairperson : Prof: Meenakshi Thampan
Inauguration : Seema Mustafa
Addresses : Dr. B.V.Vijayalakshmi
Dr. Manu Bhaskar
R. Latha Devi
Vote of Thanks : R.H.Chithra

30th NOVEMBER, 2008

**Media Seminar
P.Bhaskaran Nagar (VJT Hall)**

4 PM : Media Seminar
Topic : "Media-Society-Development"
Welcome : Kariyam Ravi

Chairman : M.P.Achuthan (Editor, Janayugam)
Inauguration : Kuldip Nayyar
Addresses : M.P. Veerendra Kumar MP
(Managing Director, Mathrubhumi)
Thomas Jacob
(Editorial Director, Malayana Manorama)
S.R.Sakthidharan
(Chairman, Kerala Press Academy)
N. Madhavankutty
C.Gouridasan Nair
(The Hindu)
S.Bhasurachandran
(Resident Editor, Kerala Kaumudi)
Vote of Thanks : Kuttiyanikad Madhu

1st DECEMBER, 2008

**Exhibition
K.A. Rajan Nagar, (Kanakakunnu Palace)**

10 AM : Exhibition
Theme : "AITUC : A Saga of relentless struggles"
Welcome : R. Ajayan
Inauguration : Jose Baby
(Deputy Speaker,
Kerala Legislative Assembly)
Vote of Thaks : E.C.Satheesan

K.L. Mahendra Nagar (Sooryakanthi, Kanakakunnu)

5 PM : Arrival of Jathas Carrying Flag,
Banner and Torch

Poet's Meet

Thirunalloor Karunakaran Nagar, (Kanakakunnu)

- 6 PM : Poet's meet and Cultural Evening
Welcome : Prof:V.Sundaresan
Inauguration : Prof: O.N. Kurup
Chairman : Prof: Puthusseri Ramachandran
Participants : P.K.Gopi
Alamkode Leelakrishnan
Ezhacheri Ramanchandran
Kuriepuzha Sreekumar
Anitha Thampi
Vote of Thanks : M.Sujanapriyan

2nd DECEMBER, 2008

Rally - Public Meeting

J. Chitharanjan Nagar, (Chankrasekharan Nair Stadium)

- 3 PM : Rally- Public Meeting
Welcome Speech : Panniyam Ravindran, MP
Chairman : Pramode Chandra Gogoi
(President, AITUC)
Inauguration : Gurudas Das Gupta, M.P.
(General secretary, AITUC)
Keynote Address : George Mavrikos
(General Secretay, WFTU)
Speeches : Veliyam Bhargavan
(Secretary, CPI Kerala State Council)
C.Divakaran
(Minister for Food & Civil Supplies)

Kanam Rajendran
(General Secretary, AITUC Kerala)

C.A.Kurian
(President, AITUC Kerala)

K.P.Rajendran
(Minister for Revenue)

Binoy Viswam
(Minister for Forest & Housing)

Vote of Thanks : Mangode Radhaktishnan MLA

6.30 PM : Musical Programme
(Asianet star Singers)

3rd DECEMBER, 2008

Delegates session

K.L. Mahendra, Nagar (Sooryakanthi, Kanakakunnu)

- 9.00 AM : Recital of Patriotic Songs (MBS Choir)
9.30 AM : Flag hoisting ceremony
9.45 AM : Paying homage to the Martyrs
10.00 AM : Inaugural session
Welcome : Kanam Rajendran
(General Secretary, Preparatory Committee)
Introductory Speech : Gurudas Das Gupta
(General Secretary, AITUC)
Felicitations by the Central Trade Union Leaders and the Fraternal Delegates
Vote of Thanks : P.Raju
3 - 8 P.M. : Delegates session
K.V.Surendranath Nagar, (Gandhi Park)
6.30 : Cultural Programme By IPTA, Manipur

Cultural meet

P.Bhaskaran Nagar, (VJT Hall)

- 5 PM : Cultural Meet
- Welcome : V. P. Unnikrishnan
- Chairman : Perumpuzha Gopalakrishnan
- Inauguration : U.R.Ananthamurthy
- Addresses : Kakkanadan
C.Radhakrishnan
P.Valsala
K.R.Mohanan
(Chairman, Chalachithra Academy)
Vallikavu Mohandas
- Prize Distribution : Mullakara Ratnakaran
(Minister for Agriculture)
- Vote of Thanks : G.R.Anil
- 8 PM : Drama 'Bheemasenan', KPAC

P.Balachandra Menon Nagar, (Nishagandhi, Kanakakunnu)

- 7.00 PM : Nattukootam
(Programme by the Tribal Artists from Wyanad)

4TH DECEMBER, 2008

Delegates session

K.L. Mahendra Nagar (Sooryakanthi, Kanakakunnu)

- 9 AM – 1 PM : Delegates Session
- 1 PM – 3 PM : Lunch Break
- 3 PM – 8 PM : Delegates Session/Work of the Commissions

Seminar

P.Bhaskaran Nagar, (VJT Hall)

- 4 P.M. : Seminar
- Topic : 'Nuclear Deal and National Security'
- Welcome : Adv. P. Ramachandran Nair
- Chairman : S.Sudhakar Reddy MP
(Deputy General Secretary, CPI)
- Inaugural Address : Dr.P.K.Iyengar
(Former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission)
- Participants : M.K.Bhadrakumar
(Former Ambassador)
Prof: Sanjay K.Biswas
(Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore)
- Vote of Thanks : K.P.Sankaradas
- 7.30 PM : Nattukootam
(Performed by the Tribal Artists of Wyanad)

P.Balachandra Menon Nagar, (Nishagandhi, Kanakakunnu)

- 7.00 PM : Cultural Programme
Presented by IPTA, Manipur

5th DECEMBER, 2008

Delegates session

K.L. Mahendra, Nagar (Sooryakanthi, Kanakakunnu)

- 9 PM - 1 PM : Delegates Session/Presentation of the Commission Reports
- 1 PM - 3 PM : Lunch Break
- 3 PM - 8 PM : Delegates Session Continues
- 8 PM - 9 PM : Concluding Session
- Vote of Thanks : Adv. P.Ramachandran Nair

Welcome Remarks

by

Com. Promode Gogoi, President, AITUC

Dear Comrade delegates, fraternal delegates from foreign countries, fraternal delegates from National Trade Union Centres, Federations and other Comrades,

We offer our heartfelt thanks to the Kerala State Committee of the AITUC for organizing the 39th Session in Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of Kerala State, in such a grand way and reflecting the rich tradition of the Malayalee people.

The AITUC was founded in Bombay (Mumbai) on 31st October, 1920. The great patriot and national leader Lala Lajpat Rai delivered his presidential speech and said: ***"the workers of India are joining hands not only to satisfy the interests of Indian labour but also to forge a link in the chain of International brotherhood"***.

The All India Trade Union Congress has been consistently following the above objective. The All India Trade Union Congress is a founder member of the World Federation of Trade Unions. It has been playing an important role in functioning and expanding the base of the WFTU. We firmly believe in the unity and solidarity of the International working class movement.

The present day developments demand that the working people will have to unite to fight together to defeat the offensive of the capitalist world headed by USA against the working people and the underdeveloped countries.

The All India Trade Union Congress has grown tremendously since the last session. It has led many glorious struggles of the working people. In those struggles several thousands participated, many have been arrested and participants had to face atrocities committed by police and hired gangs. The Delhi March of AITUC on 23.11.2006 was a historic event in the working class movement. Working people of East, West, North and South joined the march traveling thousands of Kilometers by roads, trains and buses. The General Strike of 20th August 2008, sponsored by Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions was a great success. In some states, such as West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura, Assam, Manipur, Bihar, Jharkhand etc. the strike turned into bandh. The AITUC played leading role in organizing the General Strike.

The AITUC has emerged as the third largest trade union in the country. The AITUC could succeed because of the sincere efforts made by unions, federations, the state leadership and under the able leadership of the Secretariat headed by the General Secretary Com. Gurudas Das Gupta.

The UPA Government has pursued policies against the public sector, trade union rights and handing over industries to FDI. The coming period will be a period of determined struggles against the anti worker and anti-people policies of Govt. of India. The struggles are likely to be tough, bitter and prolonged. The Trade Unions will have to prepare itself to face the situation.

Long Live the AITUC
Working Class, Unite

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

A hungry state is a failed state. A political system that does not deliver is only playing a hoax on the people. Political democracy without economic democracy is half baked. The right to vote without the right to life is a sham; a mockery. A planning process that widens economic disparity and accentuates social divide is a misnomer. High economic growth that excludes the majority of the people is irrelevant to society.

It is more than clear that more than sixty years of freedom have failed to guarantee the minimum amenities of human life to the overwhelming majority in India. What is needed is a radical political change in favour of the common man. Human history teaches us that this can only be effected by popular intervention; by mass upheaval. The perpetuation of core poverty and pauperization of the masses, thanks to the policies pursued by the successive governments must be fought. The people must get an equitable share of the economic gains of development. A radical change is urgently needed.

World Capitalist Crisis – American Meltdown

That capitalism cannot provide a decent human life to the world citizens is becoming increasingly clear. The myth of the omnipotence of the capitalist system has well and truly exploded. **America, the heaven of modern capitalism is in deep economic crisis that is possibly worse than the Great Depression of the 1930s. It has in fact led the world into a global recession.** The malaise is spreading wide as governments struggle to halt the carnage of the vanishing value of their wealth. According to ILO estimate, 2 crore people shall lose jobs in the world due to this melt down. Labour Department announced that US had already lost 1,59,000 jobs in September, up from 73,000 jobs lost in August.

What is most disturbing is that tax-payers' money is being lavishly doled out to bail out the corrupt coterie of the management to save the system from total collapse; to stop the blood-bath at the bourses. In fact under capitalism, profits belong to the individual but losses are nationalized. The imminent issue is the mighty fall at Wall Street that has brought the world markets down with it. The obvious answer is that the reckless financial system has paid the price of its greed. For years the financial market roared along as if there was nothing to fear. Reckless speculation was carried on with impunity. Fictitious deals were contracted to bring about artificial boom unconnected with business ethics and economic fundamentals. Fear was believed to be primitive. The Wall Street did not have to worry about regulation, because the regulators were all too dizzy, caught up in the speculative boom and had no will to stop its corrupt trustees. It is true that since Bill Clinton's second term (1997-2001) and through the eight years of George Bush's presidency, the entire legal framework for regulation of financial markets had been eroded. Whatever laws remained on books could not be regulated as Bush team studiously sliced the small remaining staff of the Securities and Exchange Commission where enforcement team is now 1,209 and will drop to 1,177 next year. There are more lawyers on one floor of an investment bank than in the entire Securities and Exchange Commission enforcement division. The general accounting officer reported that the Commission's budget is so meager that it is forced to be selective in its enforcement activities and this has lengthened the time required to complete certain enforcement investigations.

Risk ceased to be a factor in any calculation because a host of deceptive instruments, in the guise of derivatives, had whisked away the risk. Derivatives like credit default swaps had overwhelmed the American economy. When fear of a meltdown disappears, the economy becomes the potpourri of greed and ignorance. When greed surpasses fear, catastrophe starts to set in – **unbridled greed, reckless deregulation, corrupt practices, shoddy transactions are inherent in the capitalist system; not just in America but throughout the world, India included.**

To take the story of the bankruptcy of the capitalist system forward, one should begin with **158 years old Lehman Brothers**, it merrily filed for bankruptcy declaring that it owed more than \$600 billion to the creditors world wide. Next came **Merrill Lynch**, another Wall Street icon. It decided to pre-empt a similar fate by choosing to sell out to the Bank of America. Meanwhile, the insurance and investment major, **AIG, American International Group** was struck by a major ratings down grade only to be bailed out by the Federal Government. **Nationalisation was found to be the remedy to deal with bankrupt capitalist giants.** At the time of nationalisation, losses on mortgage-related securities were estimated at \$34.3 billion in case of **Freddie Mac** and \$11.2 billion in case of **Fannie May**, both of which were deliberately kept out of calculations of regulatory capital by treating them as temporary losses, even these losses were allowed to generate deferred tax assets on the balance sheets on the assumption that they would make large enough profits in future for their losses to be offset against the tax to be paid on the profits. The Fannie and Freddie experiment illustrates an ominous feature of the increasingly deregulated financial markets across the globe. **The tendency clearly is to exploit easy liquidity conditions, largely eroding all social savings, to create leveraged investments in areas ranging from housing and real estate to stock and derivatives, to satisfy the endless greed for unlimited profit without caring to consider the risks associated with such crazy investment.**

The USA's financial collapse, the biggest in 75 years was waiting to happen. A prolonged period of aggressive risk-taking, based on fraudulent processes to entice more and more people into the network of greed, with the sub-prime market at its epicentre, infected the global financial system and played havoc. **The wanton greed of the capitalist system brought about its downfall and the G7 finance ministers are knocking their heads to find the elusive solution.**

Analysing the calamity that has overtaken the so-called super powers of the world, it is clear that the principal cause of the under-

lying volatility in the international capital movement is the huge U.S. deficit. **This was a country that was borrowing a stupendous \$3 billion, almost Rs 13,500 crores, from the rest of the world every day.** Two-thirds of this money came from the developing countries. To put it simply, the rest of the world has been saving so that American citizens can live beyond their means. **American economy is, in fact, an insolvent economy. Further, the USA has invested in China and India less than half of what the two countries have invested in the USA.** It is no surprise, therefore, as home prices have crashed by a fifth over a year, job losses mounted. According to the New York Governor, around 11,000 jobs were lost in the New York finance and insurance sectors between July 2007 and July 2008. This number continues to grow and an estimated **40,000 jobs have been lost in New York alone. In the whole of America, the number is closer to a frightening 1,20,000 courtesy the financial turmoil. Actually, job loss has been much more distressing.**

One need not be an economist to see that the growth pattern of the US economy was superficial and not based on economic fundamentals. It was based on a generous helping of credits and loans that went on to create a financial bubble in a system where **profits did not depend on production but are created by sophisticated fraudulent instruments that formed the base of huge paper trades.** Deprived of the technology stimulus the industrial base of the country suffered as America surrendered its superiority to countries with lower costs, hard working people with intellectual prowess, such as South East Asia. Having thus surrendered its industrial potential, America, however, kept control over the cash flows and helped along with its national budget helped the country become a bottomless market for global produce. This u-turn became a source of danger for all countries that got totally entangled with the U.S. system to market their produce. **The toxic meltdown in the USA has thus not only put its own people in dire distress but has threatened most countries in the world that were networked into it.**

Impact on India

One danger of the financial meltdown is the imminent loss of jobs as is already in evidence in the IT and financial sectors in India. There are reports of a quiet downsizing in many other sectors too where companies seek to cut costs, cut down wage and salaries. Equally ominous is the risk of a sharp drop in new hirings. The American meltdown may lead to a further worsening of the already critical labour market. According to a leading corporate manager the job cuts in the Indian IT sector alone would be between 15,000 and 25,000 in the next six months. According to another study, American crisis may be disastrous for India, it may take away nearly 10 lakh jobs.

The Sensex has slipped under the impact of the global recession, declining to 11,328, losing 366.88 points in one day as the Foreign Institutional Investors withdrew in millions. Of late, the sensex has dipped even below 10,000 points on the eve of Diwali. They have taken away this year around \$11 billion against their net investment of \$17.4 billion last year. The total outflow of foreign funds in the recent period has been \$ 36 billion, total foreign exchange reserve as on 31st March, 2008 was \$ 309 billion. It has declined to \$ 273 billion on 17th October, 2008. Till recent times, domestic players were used to this frenzied buying of Indian equity and are now confronted with the FIIs fleeing with whatever they can lay their hands on, ignoring the concessions announced by the SEBI, such as the relaxation of norms related to Participatory Notes. The devil's game may have moderated the hyper volatility of the Indian stock market but its tremors are being felt right down the spine of the Indian economy. **The possible fallout is a slow down of the economy that is already in evidence and even a recession, coupled with the high inflation of food prices going through the roof, the country may well be confronted with the dreaded stagflation.**

If India has not been brutally assaulted by the American financial convulsion, it is the presence of a strong public sector that has somewhat insulated the country. This signals the

need for a review of the process of economic reforms without adequate safeguards. **Therefore, there is need to review and rescind the economic policies in totality because the global experience has told us that unregulated financial markets is not the way to take the country forward.** Whether Dr Manmohan Singh, who is moving close to America shall take any lesson from the U.S. debacle is the prime question. Meanwhile, the damage being inflicted on India is becoming clear with wage cuts, job cuts even as a crippling inflation visits the working classes. This is a clear sign that moves must be initiated to stop the wanton liberalization and demand a change in the system that is based on speculation and superficial growth while refocusing on fundamentals and growth with equity. **Thanks to the Left, also the trade union movement in the street that pulled the brake, prevented the government from moving ahead with its drastic liberalisation programme. This has in fact acted as preemptive damage control.**

The Indian economy is in deep distress. The U.S. crisis has taken its toll with October 10, 2008 marked as the day of the blood bath. The Sensex had lost 1,000 points in a single day's trading; the RBI was in a state of panic and lost no time in announcing a 150 basic points cut in the cash reserve ratio, infusing Rs 60,000 crores into the cash starved banking system. Hereafter, government has released another hefty sum of Rs.20,000 crores to bail out the mutual funds who have run short of funds due to heavy panic withdrawals by the investors. Even that did not help. The market lost any immediate hope that it had once when it was known that the Index of **Industrial Production had declined to an abysmal low of 1.3 per cent for August, from 10.9 just about a year ago.** Government's policy of liquidity infusion releasing hefty amount from the State Exchequer, further liberalizing the market, reducing cash reserve ratio, even having cut in a Repo Rate, at the same time, virtual withdrawal of restrictions on Participatory Note did not ease the tension. Going ahead eventually Government seek to surrender to the demand of the corporates with regard to reduction of interest rate.

This is nothing short of a world wide holocaust; a Great Depression engulfing the whole world. The Asian economic giant, Singapore has slipped into a recession and slashed its growth forecast. Terror struck Pakistan has despatched its top officials to Washington and London seeking a bailout package of billions of dollars. Reportedly, Britain's richest man, Lakshmi Mittal lost nearly £7 million per hour in the last four months. The Danish parliament has guaranteed all bank deposits in a move to prevent a run on banks amidst the market turmoil. Stock prices in Europe and Asia have nose dived confirming worst fears of the global contagion.

In India, the trends in the bullion market indicate that investors are pulling out of the secondary market and investing in safe gold. This trend will affect the primary market and even trigger a slow down in the productive sector and further intensify the recessionary trends undermining job potential and wages levels. However, making more money available by injecting liquidity is not the only means of correcting the situation; it may at best halt a further plunge in the Sensex. **What is needed is substantial investment in the productive sector to reverse the economic slowdown and build up confidence, creating jobs and improving the purchasing power of the people, generating additional effective demand in the economy. Strengthening the public sector, improving the role of the regulatory authorities making them effective are other important imperatives.**

The Indian economy is in the grip of a **stagflation** of which there are clearly visible signs. The slow down had started some time earlier as growth rate figures were slipping. This happened before the US recession had set in. **Government of India is in fact intends to hide behind the global meltdown to cover up the failure of its policies.** Agriculture has lost its momentum and industrial production has dipped. There has even been a retardation in the dynamism of the construction sector in the recent period Personal loans for housing decelerated in comparison to the corresponding period last year. The crisis is so all embracing that even lending to the real estate

sector has fallen as banks have started fearing that they are already overexposed to the realty sector. Finally, the most dynamic sector of the Indian economy, the service sector, has also been affected almost across the board. Export growth is at 18 month low. The gloom in the Indian stock market is not only due to the world wide meltdown and recession, it is also due to the economic fundamentals going wrong within the country.

As the Indian growth slows down, inflation remains stubbornly high. The rising inflation is led by a rise in prices of essential commodities. The recent downward trend is nominal and does not provide solace in a world in which prices have shot through the roof. The growth of gross domestic product during the first quarter of 2008-09 is significantly lower: 7.9 per cent against 9.2 per cent in the corresponding period last year. What is alarming is that India might have taken a U turn vis-a-vis growth and future figures will be far below the 9 per cent. It may be argued that one quarter's results may not indicate what the future has in store but there are too many contra-indications that provide great cause for concern.

Crisis in Agriculture

In a recent report titled Agriculture for Development, even the World Bank has refocused on agriculture and asked that it be placed at the centre of the development agenda. It says that in the twenty-first century, agriculture continues to be a fundamental instrument for sustainable development and poverty reduction. According to the report, three out of every four poor people in developing countries, live in rural areas; 2.1 billion live on less than \$ 2 a day and 880 million on less than \$ 1 a day. Most of them depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. There are nearly 5.5 billion people in the developing world. Of them three billion live in rural areas. **Therefore, development of agriculture is the key to the improvement of living conditions of the vast majority in the developing countries, including India. Agricultural production is important for food security, it is also a source of income for the majority of the rural population.**

The process of economic reform through liberalizing the economy, looking for privatization and globalization has not only abandoned land reforms but also cynically neglected agriculture and the consequences have been grave for the nation. Public investment has dipped to 1.9 per cent in 2005-2006 from 2.2 per cent in 2001-02. Needless to add, the same ominous trend continues unabated. Irrigation, the key to increased agricultural production, has been shamefully overlooked. Nearly one-third of the cultivable land that is irrigated, produces more than half of the total agricultural output while the remaining two-thirds, 95 million hectares, produces the rest.

Since land reform has been abandoned, large land holdings still remain with zamindars, kulaks, of late, corporatisation of agricultural production has set in at a high speed which is left is subsistence farming involving crores of farmers. **India is indeed a nation of subsistence farmers.** Small family farms are being wiped out everywhere in the world as also in India, the process of disintegration has been intense during the last 15 years. Small farmers are getting dispossessed of land affected deeply by commercialization and corporatisation. According to a study made by Tata Institute of Social Sciences, huge indebtedness has overtaken the entire farming community. The NSS 59th Round further reiterates that indebtedness has increased from 26% in 1991 to 48% in 2003. **The investment in agriculture has gone down from 15% of the planned investment in the First Five Year Plan to 5.2% in the 10th Five Year Plan having a drastic cut indeed. In the meantime, value of money has declined.**

Over the years investment in agriculture remain static. Agriculture has been severely affected due to shortage of funds, a decline of Rs.30,000 crore per year. The share of rural development in the total expenditure of the government is very low, as a percentage of GDP, the allocation of 2007-08 is below the revised estimate of 2002-03. The expenditure estimated towards the provision of subsidies for different purposes has declined as a proportion of the total budgetary expenditure from 10.9 per cent in 2003-04 to 8.5% in 2007-08. There are other indicators to extreme deprivations, the total spend-

ing on health is 1.38% of the GDP at the national level, while the national common minimum programme promised 2 to 3%. The ruling regime is blind to realities, there is hardly any move to revive the agriculture, stem the crisis. Along with the drop of public investment, private investment has tumbled down, even the supply of cheap rural credit through nationalized banks has declined, rural deposits in banks had dwindled down, a number of rural branches have been closed down. Even a number of nationalized banks had defaulted in the discharge of their statutory obligation of advancing 18% of their total advances to agriculture. The government has gone further, the prime minister has even eulogized the role of high cost private moneylenders, even in tune with his views, a bill has been introduced in parliament to legitimize private money lending with no cap on interest rate. **It is no surprise therefore that the rural India is the abode of hunger and destitution with nearly 60% of population contributing nearly 20% of the GDP.**

With food production dropping below the population growth rate, there has been a reduction in the per capita availability of food. As such, India has lost its food sovereignty; it has to import food even at a higher price than the ruling domestic market price. The significant cause of the pauperisation of the peasantry, are growing indebtedness, high incidence of poverty, absence of social infrastructure and the exploding cost of agriculture.

On top of everything, there are exploitative international agreements entered into by successive governments that have seriously affected the farmers of the country. The global competitors, having taken over the control of the trade in agricultural commodities, they rig up prices. Consequently, the price of domestic output crash. While the price of coffee was booming in the west, farmers in Kerala committed suicide between 2002-03.

Mr P Sainath, Rural Affairs, Editor, the Hindu, participating in the Speaker's Series, Parliament House, Sept 6 2007, while referring to farmer suicides, stated, "but what is important is that the number is not the crucial issue, I think even the figure of one death is appalling enough". If we analyse statistics, two-thirds of the suicides have taken

place in half a dozen states, that account for just one-third of the population. These farmers who have been, in fact, pushed to produce cash crop. Since exports induce growth, the farmers were asked to contribute to growth. This emphasis on production for export caught them in a cash crop bind, especially when export demand fell, it drove them to indebtedness, pauperisation, and killed as many as 1.5 lakh peasants.

Agriculture being in a critical condition even after the completion of 10 Five Year Plans, it is no surprise that there is extreme volatility in crop production. The rate of growth for rice stood at 6.1 per cent in 2004-05, 10.5 per cent in 2005-06, 1.7 per cent in 2006-07 and 3.21 per cent in 2007-08. The corresponding figures for wheat were 5.0 per cent, 1.1 per cent, 9.2 per cent, 3.4 per cent. There was particularly marked volatility in the coarse cereal and oilseeds production. This volatility gave rise to another feature in Indian agriculture: low growth over the 2003-04 to 2007-08 period for all crops save sugarcane and cotton. With food production in a crisis and further tormented by a record inflation, there seems to be no "agricultural revival" in sight even though the recent growth figures talk of an improvement. Such improvement is at best partial and certainly not enough to create a dent in the fundamentally weak position that had developed over the post reform period in India.

Fixing blame does not fix the crisis but it offers lessons and there is no doubt that decades of faulty policy measures have led to the ongoing agricultural debacle. Even in the best case scenario, the rate of agricultural growth has been no more than 2.9 per cent of the 2001-08 period. On a first-quarter to first-quarter basis, agriculture growth dipped to 0.3 per cent from 4.4 per cent in a disquieting development. What needs to be stated is that the agricultural decline is a part of the overall economic slowdown that is tormenting India.

Industrial Slowdown

The second feature of the year 2008-09 GDP projections that causes deep concern is the substantial slowdown in manufacturing

growth from 10.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2007-08 to 5.6 per cent in the first quarter of the current financial year. Manufacturing that recorded sharp acceleration in the annual growth rates after 2003 has also fallen a victim to the intensifying recessionary trends. The construction sector too is similarly affected, losing its dynamism with reports of a price collapse and a drop in the activity in the housing sector with credit to the housing sector drying up following suspected overexposure to a sector that now stands revealed having shaky foundations. As a result the increased lending to the real estate sector has corrected itself, showing a fall from 69 per cent to 38 per cent. Finally, there is now evidence that the growth has become overdependent on the expansion of the services sector with that portion of the GDP depending on the services sector growing much faster than the rest of the GDP. With a sharp deceleration in the services sector – most critically in the areas of financial services, followed by insurance, trade, hotels, transport and communications – that was an important contributor to the firming up of aggregate growth, overall growth has shown signs of a decline. Taken together and placed before the backdrop of the global financial collapse, the Indian economy cannot but be enveloped in gloom. **Given the presence of double-digit inflation, food articles contributing the most to the price spiral, surely the Indian economy is faced with stagflation.**

With agricultural growth headed southwards and inflation headed northwards, the inbuilt ability of the system to manage the effects of the difference between agricultural and non agricultural growth is now clearly weakening, presaging a long trek into the land of slow growth amidst inflation and even stagflation. The other alarming feature is the spectre of jobless growth: organized manufacturing employment is on the decline and the latest report of the National Sample Survey Organization talks of an employment decline to two percentage points of 2004 and 2006. In the rural areas, while the employment rate for males remained constant at 55 per cent, female employment showed a two per cent drop. In the urban sector, employment fell by one per cent for men and about three per cent for women.

The employment scenario has other worrisome features too. There has been a rise in the proportion of male casual labour from 29 per cent in 1983 to 33 per cent in 2005-06 in rural areas and from 15 per cent to 16 per cent in urban areas. There are some figures throwing light on the plight of women workers who face greater joblessness than men, part from being paid less than men and being made to work for longer hours. The economic census of 2005, which purported to cover all enterprises other than crop production and plantation, says that there are only 100 million people in 42 million enterprises of which the organized sector accounts for 27 million people. There are then two conclusions: overall jobs have declined and there are more jobs in the unorganized than the organized sector. Even the \$40 billion information technology sector, which employs a million people, reports a slowdown in employment growth.

The 5th Economic Census 2005 reveals there are in the country 41.83 million establishments, 25.54 million in rural areas and 16.29 million in urban areas employing around 100.9 million persons, of them 78.3 million are male and 20.2 million are female. Private ownership accounts for 39.61 million units, while in public sector, there are only 2.22 million establishments. **Around 7.54 million, nearly 18.03 per cent establishments do not have permanent premises, they are in fact floating establishments. Even after nearly 50 years of economic development, 31.74 million establishments work without power, constituting 76% of the total.** While employment in own account establishments is 46.5 million, 54.4 million are hired labour. If the profile of the hired workers is further examined, 41.3 million is male, 11.6 million female and 1.5 million children. Manufacturing sector is the largest employer, providing employment to 25.5 million constituting 25.25%, next is retail trade having 25.1 million, 24.91% of the total. Third highest employment is in farming of animals, 9.2 million constituting 9.13 of the total employment. Tiny size of the overwhelming majority of the establishment is further confirmed by the volume of manpower employed, average size of the employment per establishment is 2.41 persons, this has contracted over years, from 2.88 in 1990 to 2.75 in 1998, finally to 2.41 persons in 2005 conclusively establishing that

the volume of employment has been constantly going down in the economy. Lastly, distribution of establishments by size class of employment has revealed 95% of the establishments employ only 1 to 5 workers, 3.42% engage 6 to 9 workers, only 1.51% establishments employ 10 workers and above. To sum up, the intriguing reality is that economy is essentially predominated by primitive mode of production without power, most of the establishments are having tiny size, the average employment in overwhelming majority is so small that labour laws are not enforced, only about 1.51% establishments come under the jurisdiction of labour law and statutory benefits.

An even more sinister feature is the high incidence of unemployment among the educated youth among the rising phenomenon of unemployability, according to the Team base India urban report. It is also evident that the organized sector is creating a large mass of unorganized labour, represented by the increasing contractualization of labour. There is an emerging world of home workers who operate from homes on a piece rate basis. Corporates tend to employ these invisible workers to avoid statutory liabilities, avoid payment of minimum wage and escape the daily eight-hour schedule. **All this is done to reduce labour cost, minimize production cost and earn fabulous profits.**

Distressing conditions of the Working Masses

Not only is unemployment a dreadful phenomenon, distressing employment conditions is frightful. Real wage is on the decline. According to the Economic Census 2005 real wages in the triennium ending 2003-04 were 11 per cent lower than in 1995-96. In sharp contrast, labour productivity tripled between 1981-2003. **Wages now account for 15 per cent of the value addition in the organised, one of the lowest such ratios anywhere in the world.** In the case studies of the employment trends in India, Prof Jayati Ghosh has said that the benefits of increased labour productivity largely went to those deriving rent, interest and profit incomes rather than to the workers. Outside the organised sector, real wages for the casual workers have declined for all categories. A staggering

394.9 million workers or 86 per cent of the workforce work in the unorganised sector without any social security cover.

Mr Vidyadhar Date, a veteran journalist writing for Economic and political Weekly, who has been very candid about the working conditions of the working people, has stated, "Poverty level wages, degrading working conditions, the total absence of democracy in the workplace, the demonising of legitimate protests and a prejudicial ruling class mindset where the trade union is anathema are all part of the harsh reality of workers today". There can be no better appraisal of the working conditions as done by Mr Date.

Workers work for 10 hours a day for Rs 1000 as wage in the 'new wave' factories, in total violation of all labour laws. **The over supply of manpower in the labour market with declining job opportunities enables employers to resort to hire and fire, the job seekers are forced to accept the harsh working conditions imposed by the management.** Since the Government has no role in protecting the interest of the working population, having little or no bargaining power, the working masses are left at the mercy of profit hungry corporates. **Liberalization has led to the relaxation of labour laws and the state sponsored capitalist development has ushered in a climate of total denial of trade union rights to the workers.** Trade unions must fight back developing broadest unity.

In the background of world recession, and slow down of economy, the State-sponsored capitalism has mounted formidable attack on the working masses. What is significant, all these years the man-days lost due to strike is much less than the days lost due to lock out. Evidently, the corporates are on a rampage, truly at the same time resistance of the working masses have not been able to gear up to the situation. Lamentably, the movement is at back foot.

Mostly, the labour laws are on paper, equally the tripartite bodies at the national level are in hibernation. Even the labour courts are lavishly granting adjournments. More ominous is the role of the judiciary. Significantly, the legislatures have no time to deliberate on labour

problems. Less said is better about the performance of the governments at the Central and State levels. **While the State apparatus is heavily biased, police set up as the repressive organ of the State leaves no stone unturned to undermine the trade union movement to enable the oppressive capitalists to have their way merrily.**

To take this story of **authoritarian capitalism** further, It is no surprise that trade unions are not being allowed to be registered, those of the workers who had moved ahead with the process of registration are summarily thrown out of job, without any charge-sheet at all just on receiving the prior intimation in this regard surreptitiously from the officials of the registering authority. Clearly enough the organs of the government are working at tandem to give a free hand to the corporates. Further on the denial of workers rights, the Minimum Wages Act is cynically violated, the Provident Fund, ESIC dues are not paid, 8-hours work a day is overruled, Gratuity Act is denied, maternity benefit law is avoided. No question of having pension and other benefits of social security. Nearly 93% of the working people who are in the unorganized sector, most of whom are not unionized, are left to abject misery and exploitation.

Adding more about the hardships, there has been general decline in the wage level. As inflation becomes galloping, most of the working population is without the benefit of dearness allowance, reeling under the impact of hardening living conditions.

One of the most disconcerting features of the industrial development during the 1990s is the apparently negative relation between output and employment growth in the organized industry. Aggregate employment in the organized manufacturing sector has declined from 1997. Public organized industry is no exception. The same trend continues unabated with a short respite between 1993 and 1997. There are reasons to believe that the pattern of manufacturing growth under open economic regime tends to be such that the responsiveness of the employment growth to the growth of output declines. **It is worth noting that there exist a contradiction**

between high output growth and employment growth. This is an ominous feature that characterizes both India and China during the years when they have opened their economies to trade and investment. More to say, there may be other reasons also.

Growing liberalization has led to mounting pressure of competition, both in import and export, as such, higher level of productivity and lower wage has obviously become the priority for the corporates. It is natural that this trend leads to lowering of wage cost. Significantly, this is the root cause for growing divergence between employment and output growth. As value of output is kept increasing, there is a fall in the number of workers, while those who are on the job is either stagnating or on the decline. The jobless character of growth pattern is further confirmed by public and private aggregate in the organized manufacturing having a decline to nearly 6 million in 2003 from 6.9 million in 1997. Looking at the other side, the wage level in a period of rapid growth of industry, dips low as gross domestic product reaching new height.

The CMIE report of corporate sector, February, 2008 further establishes that the share of wage as a part of the profit after tax is proportionately much less than what is due to the corporate management. As per the report, in 2006-07, the growth of profit after tax had registered a new high of 36.6% whereas the wages and salaries which include managerial remuneration even of the top executive, by any means a hefty volume, is only 22.1 %. **There can be no further doubt of loss of employment, decline in wages, increase in workload, curiously enough booming profit grabbed by the industrial tycoons.** Further, the jobless growth, wage cut and reduction in manpower, along with rampant violation of labour laws, is an undisputed reality speaking out the weakness of the trade union movement and its subdued bargaining power.

Profile of the Indian Working Masses

The report on the "Condition of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganised Sector" is an illuminating document throwing light on the largest segment of the workforce, determining the

nature of their job, their remuneration, working and living conditions. The report is a thorough indictment of the process of development of the capitalist system, highlighting the apathy of the State towards the primary producers of wealth for the nation. Further, the report estimates the total volume of employment in the organized and unorganized categories as on January, 2005, of the total 457 million, nearly 395 million or about 86% belong to the unorganized category. While further looking into the unorganized category, the report differentiates between agricultural and non-agricultural category. According to the report, the agricultural workers constitute the largest segment, around 253 millions; the remaining 142 million is in the pool of non-agricultural workforce. The informalisation of the organized sector of production is most vividly reflected in the report.

It is no surprise that the number of informal workers have largely multiplied in the unorganized sector. It has shot up from 20.5 million to 29.1 million, an increase of 8.6 million. Clearly the implication is that the entire net increase in employment in the organized sector, constitute of informal workers, without job security and social benefit.

The unorganized sector, as the report classifies, is constituted of those who belong to unincorporated private enterprises owned by individual or households engaged in the sale and production of goods and services, operated on a proprietary or partnership basis with less than 10 workers. The other constituents of the unorganized sector are all those who are engaged in agricultural activities other than plantation and incorporate or cooperative farming, bulk of small retail traders including the many forms of street vendors, those who work in much of the household, cottage and village industrial units and the vast array of those engaged in personal services.

A shocking revelation of the findings of the commission is that, nearly 79% of the workers in the unorganized sector is poor and vulnerable. They are able to spend not more than Rs.20 per capita at today price on consumption expenditure. What is more revealing is that the level of consumer expenditure is determined substantially by earnings and earnings by work, hard work indeed. It may not be

so at the higher economic level. As appraisal is made looking down into the bottom of the society, more inequalities are revealed with reference to consumer expenditure. More glaringly it is in respect of income and assets.

Going still further, more detailed analysis of National Sample Survey (NSS data) on the earnings of the two categories, organized and unorganized, is done by a number of economists. It is found that regular workers are paid 3.3 times more than the casuals measured at the mean.

The dispersion of wages among the regular workers is much more than the casuals. This is because of age and education. These variables play a much larger role in the determination of regular wages as do industry and occupation. In the case of casuals, it is only single point variable, geographical location. This is particularly true for the male workers.

Finally, the vast majority of the working mass living in the backyard of the economy, devoid of any form of social protection, denied of statutory rights and benefits, working in the most distressed condition, having no or little bargaining power, need to be attended to by the trade union movement, acting not on the social compulsion only but for discharging its elementary duty to the mass of the people to whom it owes its allegiance. Struggle must be unleashed for the due empowerment of the most exploited social forces. AITUC must play a significant role in this process.

The prime force, who are engaged in the production of national wealth, must get in exchange of their labour reasonable share of the value they add. It is not a question of justice, not necessarily a matter of charity it is the bounden duty that the society must perform. Trade union movement must carry out its obligation. Ultimately it is this supreme task that must inspire the trade union movement to fight for its own class with great priority. If the movement operates within the confines of the organized sector, it loses its vitality. It is sure to become an irrelevant social force in the coming period. **Trade union movement must spearhead the struggle of the unorganized.**

No comprehensive assessment on the working condition of the masses can be complete without looking into the specific problems of the working women, who constitute a large segment of the national workforce. They suffer from wage disparity, gender discrimination, sexual harassment and multiple form of additional social and economic exploitation. Women workers are less unionised compared to the male counterparts. The manifold social functions women have to perform seriously jeopardize women participation in the process of trade unionism. **While organizing the unorganized, it is more important that trade union movement extends itself into the working women.**

Fallacy of the High Growth

Before the present economic slow down had set in, there was a period of high growth reaching 9.2% in 2006-07. Mr, Chidambaram was all in glee. While in New York, September, 2007 he declared, stronger growth was ahead of India, investment had surged ahead of consumption, the foundation for the future had been strong. Unfortunately, it did not take much time to prove how false was his claim. His optimism was based on one-sided appraisal of the performance of the economy. It was all a story of corporate glory, delinking the growth from peoples' welfare.

The story of 'unparalleled growth' of the economy begins with the success story of mobilisation of resources in the primary market in 2006. The capitalists had been able to mobilise a hefty Rs.2,34,903 crores in 2006. The corporates had made overseas acquisition worth of 8 billion US dollars in 146 transactions across the globe. Not merely that, at least 4 Indian tycoons have virtually taken over the corporate world by storm innovating improving strategising and transforming the dreams into billion dollar reality. In one weekend in 2006 October, corporate jets of 3 captains of industry were parked at London as they bid for enterprises worth of 12 billion dollars, almost at Rs.53,234 crores. In fact, the financial assets of one of such billionaires is assessed to be around Rs. 1,27,000 crores.

The story of Government-backed corporate success goes even

further. Between 2003 and 2006 corporate India's net profit had swelled from Rs.55,716 crores to Rs. 1,23,173 crores. It must have jumped further as the companies had drawn up a strategy of 30% rise of profit. The trend of unusual expansion of Indian companies was further conformed by the analysis of the performance of Indian corporate houses. A giant corporate having 23 million subscribers had launched a joint venture of insurance and mutual fund and significantly hooked up with a global giant to foray into retail trade in India. By the end of the decade the reserve of the corporate is likely to sore up to Rs.67,000 crores.

In the meantime, the rate of savings had picked up from 24% to 30%, investment exceeded the rate of savings, it was around 32%. It is not surprising that that export had averaged to a rise of 20%. Foreign exchange reserve at a particular period of time had swelled to 240 billion US dollars. Even rupee had strengthened against dollar. Not amazingly, the external debt was one of the lowest among the developing countries. While the government of Dr. Manmohan Singh, even its Finance Minister boasted of the economic reform that as he claimed had brought about the magic growth rate, second only to China. The symptoms of the claimed prosperity was virtually visible in the sale of cars, boom in the real estate business and also in the ring of 5 million mobile connections sold every month. Above all, in the hyper zoom in the sensex level. Never mind, whether or not the first track economic development has improved the quality of life of the masses.

The ruthless capitalist development, GDP picking up to 9.2% has to be discussed in the background of increasing support of the State in the form of tax concessions, subsidies, tax holidays as never before. The Special Economic Zones (SEZs) with all its specialty in the abandonment of labour laws were allowed to be set in hundreds enjoying undiluted government patronage. The regressive tax system made possible to deepen the concentration of wealth to take place enormously. It was in fact a government sponsored capitalist growth in a condition of depressing human fundamentals. AITUC is firmly of the opinion that there should be no more Special Economic Zones in the country.

While economic reforms particularly liberalisation envisaged growth of free market engendering free competition, in reality, it is otherwise, rapid growth of giant corporations with fabulous wealth having the capacity to monopolise the market, manipulate prices, regulate production, having the ability to interfere with the free play of market forces. Growth of monopoly is outrageous. It is clearly a massive economic aberration.

Eminent economist, Prof. Amit Bhaduri in his book, 'Development with Dignity' had stated: "It should be clear that there is a serious disconnection between our economic and political system." According to him, high growth does not deliver what the most poor Indians expect it to do. Further the author says, **"it is a matter of shame that nearly 6 decades after Independence, we have anywhere between one-third to one-fourth of our population desperately poor, and denied the minimum conditions for human existence** – "the largest number of illiterates, millions of children, crippled or blinded due to malnutrition." What he pleads for is the integration of growth and distribution in the same process of economic development.

Late Prof. Mahbub-UI-Haq, the outstanding theoretician and economist, in the first report on human development in South Asia had made a candid observation, he did not mince words to say, "there is a widespread consensus that the purpose of development is not to enlarge income but enlarge peoples' choice and that their choices extend to decent education, good health, political freedom, cultural identity, personal security, community participation, environmental security and many other areas of human well being. Development must deal with the entire society not just with economy and people must be put at the center of the stage." **According to him, the quantity of distribution of growth is as important as the quantum of growth.**

It is clear that economic growth does not automatically translate into human development. A link between growth and human life must be created through conscious national policies. If it is not really

so, policies are not articulated to benefit the poor, then, the result is obviously disastrous. The benefit of growth and development will be surely hijacked by powerful groups. **Therefore, in a liberalised economy, overpowered by high dose of globalisation, the process of transferring the benefit of economic prosperity is not automatic, conscious targeted policies are to be formulated and implemented for the equitable distribution of the wealth so generated. What is happening in India today is promotion of capitalist development at the cost of the people, island of vulgar concentration of wealth has been created in an ocean of deeply distressing massive poverty.**

Size of Poverty

Thanks to the "Report on the Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihood in the Unorganised Sector" that the bluff that India is shining has been called. According to the Report, at the end of 2004-05 about 865 millions or 77 per cent of the population were living below Rs.20 per day and constituted most of India's informal economy. **A Commission constituted by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India finally confirmed that the gains of the economic growth has not touched the overwhelming majority of the population, as such the process of development is far from being inclusive.** It is needless to add that pauperization of the masses is the basic human problem of the country. Less said, the better, the Government is basically blind to reality.

Further the latest report of the **World Bank on Poverty**, a brief note already published, has pinpointed, **India is having one-third of the global poor, the condition is worse than Sub-Saharan Africa.** The fine print estimates show that decline of poverty was faster in India between 1981 and 1990 than between 1990 - 2005. This gives further jolt to the claim that country has progressed under reform regime. **What is alarming according to the new international poverty line of \$ 1.25 per day, 42 per cent of population is living below the poverty line.** Of the world poor 1.4 billion, India has the disgraceful distinction of having 33% living in

the country. Going further, the report says, that four out of 10 Indians are too poor.

The Asian Development Bank's latest Report lambasts the claim that the economic reform has benefited India, **in booming India over half are poor.** The report while offering a new measure of poverty of \$ 1.35 per day on the purchasing power parity puts half of 1.1 billion population in the category of poor. Despite the objective analysis carried out by at least three reports, Government most shamefully sticks to its own figure of India having not more than 25 % of the population are poor.

Coming back to the report of the Commission appointed by the Ministry of Labour, the nation is confronted with the grim reality of having 6.4% of the population extremely poor. They are able to spend Rs.8.9 per day on consumer expenditure. The next segment is called poor, who are 15.4% of the population who spend Rs.11.6 on daily consumption. The third category is characterized as marginally poor who are nearly 19% of the population. They are able to spend Rs.14.6 per head per day. Summing up, about 41% of the people of the country are still poor. According to the report, a vast section of the population is considered to be vulnerable. They are 36% of our citizens. In all, 77% of the Indians are poor and vulnerable. The actual figure being 836 million, who live below \$ 2 per day. The next intriguing feature of the report is that, **the number below poverty line, according to official data, is declining but the number above the poverty line has swelled enormously living abysmally poor by any standard.** Therefore, what is glaring the entire planning process has failed nearly over a period more than 50 years to ensure economic empowerment of the vast majority. The planning process largely remain exclusive for the affluent. The right to life is shamefully not guaranteed by the State even after 60 years of freedom.

Grossly, depressing human fundamentals alarmingly contradict the claim of success of high rise prolific economic growth. Taking the account of the failure of the planned economic development further, India is having the largest number of hungry

people of the world living in a country. India is one of the dangerous places in the world for children. About 118 million household, nearly 62% of the total do not having drinking water at home. Many poor does not have access to safe drinking water. Water borne diseases, particularly diarrhea, claims lakhs of lives every year. The glory of shining growth is further subdued confronted with the reality that out of 14 lakh rural inhabitants, nearly 2 lakh inhabitants face contamination of drinking water due to arsenic, salinity, fluoride, iron, etc. There are other indicators identifying with deep depravation, the total spending on health is only 1.38 per cent of the GDP at the national level.

The number of illiterates is 350 million, almost equal to the population of 1947. The nation is in the grip of deep pauperization, lakhs of people are migrating to cities in search of jobs, over 1 lakh girls from Jharkhand are working in Delhi as domestic helps. Tata Institute of Social Sciences had carried out a study which while pointing out the grim reality says, that due to wrong policies, huge indebtedness has overtaken the entire farming community. **The NSS 59th Round further reiterates that indebtedness has increased from 26% in 1991 to 48% in 2003. The trend continues unabated. According to a research by Prof. Nagraj of Madras Institute of Development Studies between 1997 to 2005, 1,49,244 farmers have committed suicide.**

On the National Political Scenario

The national political scenario had undergone vast changes over the last three years. The left political forces had been instrumental in installing the UPA government in a bid to take the country forward developing a viable political platform to hold fundamentalism at bay. Also at the same time ameliorate the growing distress of the people. The nation had the agonizing wait; the ordeal had made the masses impatient. That is why an alternative had to be found. The BJP had failed. The Congress did not succeed. The political system did not deliver. That is why there was a need for having a new experiment lending support to the UPA government. The left had sincerely

believed that it could be the beginning of a new political process, it must break new ground to benefit the poor. As is understood the left has not pressed for its own priorities, neither it was expected that the congress would seek to push forward its own agenda of liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation. A common minimum programme was formulated on the basis of consensus to improve the living condition of the people. Unfortunately, aggressive unilateralism marked governance, new liberal policies were sought to be bull-dozed cynically rejecting the voice of dissent of the left. At best, a handful of legislative bills were postponed in face of leftist opposition in parliament. While at the same time, administrative measures grossly hurting the interest of the common people in total violation of the national common minimum programme were initiated. As unilateralism prevailed, the great experiment failed. The fragile Indian democracy had another set back. Unfortunately, Congress did not change its mindset, defeat in the elections served no lesson. Emergence of communal threat, rise of divisive forces was not considered to be too dangerous. The left support was not understood to be vital, rather they were taken to be granted. As disastrously as it can be, the congress consciously pursued a ruthless policy of economic reform further accentuating the process of economic disempowerment of the common people aggravating the economic disparity, rich and poor divide.

All that the Left had suggested, the trade unions had conquered was a modification of the reform model, giving it a people-friendly orientation. The trade unions do appreciate the role of the private capital in the present set up to be invested in the productive sector for improving productive capacity of the nation. What is more important the foreign direct investment coming in to augment production and creating jobs particularly in the green field areas was not opposed. Of course, reckless liberalization, indiscriminate privatisation and fruitless disinvestment was opposed, sale of family silver to meet the grosser's bill was objected. Trade unions stand for public ownership of national assets and dis-

agreed with the policy of handing over of national wealth to private business or allow indiscriminate export of minerals. Unfortunately enough, the Congress party emulating the old model of economic reforms of BJP, formulated its own approach contradicting the fundamentals of multi-party consensus. Therefore, the crisis became imminent.

Five budgets were presented by Mr. Chidambaram. None incorporated tangible suggestions of the Left nor of the trade unions. The trade unions while interacting with the government had pleaded for a larger budget with larger outlays for the social sectors, heavy investment for agriculture, creation of job and improving living condition of the marginalised masses. Trade unions demanded firm action to combat price rise. The suggestions were for Rs.10 lakh crore budget, enlarging the present Rs.6.5 lakh crore budget, with emphasis on labour intensive, small, medium and agro industries. The question of mobilising additional resources to meet the liabilities of larger investment, specific alternatives were clearly outlined, the regressive tax system should be replaced by progressive tax structure with higher incidence on higher income segment of the community by drawing within the tax net such sectors that were either not taxed or under-taxed. The alternatives were many but the government refused to look for options. **The government virtually rejected the suggestion of exploring the additional revenue generating potential of the economy to make a people's budget. The government lacked political will to tax the rich. The inglorious end of the Left support to the government was in sight.**

It is not that nothing was done, something was done but much more was possible to be done and was needed to be done. The 100-days employment guarantee scheme was an important move, granting the right of land to the tribals was a step in the right direction, the enactment of the Information Act deserves appreciation. Nevertheless, in all their totality, these steps proved to be inadequate to stem the brewing crisis. Moreover, the manner in which the schemes were sought to be implemented was at best faulty and half-hearted. Enough funds were not allotted for the implementation of the schemes.

The government's greatest failure was on the price front. There was total callousness in dealing with 16 year high inflation as food prices skyrocketed, fueling inflation. It was urgently needed to reduce the tax on oil products. The statistics clearly show that the government collects Rs.20 as tax for every litre of petrol sold at Rs.53 a litre. The mindless policy of the successive governments had been to collect easy revenue taxing the petroleum. It is due to wrong taxation policy. The discontinuation of high tax on petroleum was suggested to be implemented, the shortfall to be counterbalanced by taxing luxury cars, imported vehicles, fancy products by enlarging the tax base and diversifying the tax structure. As always the government did, all these proposals were turned down.

The inflation continues unabated over the year. In fact, it became alarming. The wheat price has jumped by about 200% between 2002 and 2008. Retail price of essential commodities in Delhi as on 13th March 2008 indicates a galloping increase, mustard oil by 58.2%, vanaspati by 41.1%, rice by 20%, tur dal by 20%, potatoes by 12.5%, wheat 8.3%, and atta by 7%. The price rise of food articles has not abated. Such spiraling prices has burnt huge holes in the pockets of middle class not to speak of poor and vulnerable. A chappati cost Rs.4 in Mumbai, Rs.3 in Lakshmi Sarai, a downtown of Bihar, in Delhi it cost Rs.2.5. A frugal lunch in Noida, a high rise industrial complex near to Delhi, comprising of few rotis, watery dal, low quality brinjal subji is priced at Rs.20 in a wayside shop. Imagine the hardship of the masses. Now a days, dal is no longer included in the daily menu of the poor and marginalised. It is a coveted food item in a festival dinner. When the price is sky high government's inaction is shameful. **While no action has been initiated against the hoarders, speculators and blackmarketeers least it upsets the free play of market forces, it allowed the public distribution system to collapse.**

The very fact that the food supplies are needed to sustain food security, indicates the vulnerability of casual workers, small and marginalised farmers and agricultural workers. Direct transfer to help the poor and middle class is the surest way to cool the market. Mon-

etary measures alone cannot prove to be effective. Price rise is a calamity, inaction is unpardonable. Human distress is unprecedented.

Finally, the UPA government chose to move too close to the USA, politically, militarily and economically, signalling the countdown to a break of a fragile alliance. This strategic partnership that the government sought with America, the pressure for a congruent foreign policy with the Hyde Act, specially the yearly certification by President of America that India has not violated the provisions of Indo-US Nuclear Deal, made the deal too dangerous. **One question that still remains unanswered if America choose not to set up any new nuclear power plant after the Chernobyl incident, if Russia has refrained from having new nuclear power plants why India need to go nuclear?** Nuclear power is costly, requires heavy investment, has a long gestation period, generation is accident-prone and disposal of nuclear waste is cumbersome. Even according to the agreement, the additional generation will not be more than 6% of the total generation and that too after 8 years. If India has to depend on import of raw materials for generating nuclear power, it is better to explore the import of coal for thermal power. Instead of looking for the controversial as the present deal is, it is more prudent to develop conventional sources. The early completion of Indo-Iran gas pipeline can be a milestone in successful mobilisation of resources for additional power so urgently needed for rapid growth of energy. The Indo-US nuclear deal is totally inimical to the national interest.

There has been virulent outburst of communal violence in the recent period. Most form of barbaric violence has been perpetrated in Orissa. A fact finding mission of concerned citizens had visited Kandhamal, Orissa. They had extensively toured the areas, visited the villages, talked to most of those who are in the relief camps. As the interim report says, "Orissa has been in the news in the recent years because of people's movement against mega projects in Kashipur, Kalinganagar, Niyamgiri, Lanjhirah, Jagatsinghpur and Paradip, which had constituted a large scale displacement of people. But another trend which has been growing in the past decade - the

rise of communal forces led by Sangh Parivar has taken a serious turn in the last week of August with systematic attack on the Christians in Kandhamal district and elsewhere. Christians are only 2.36% of India's population but have a rich tradition of founding and running the most prestigious educational and health care institutions in India.

However, the past couple of months witnessed attacks on Christians in some States. Particularly, since August 24, the Christians in Orissa have experienced the worst ever communal violence, their churches have been burned, Christian orphanages and the institutions have been set on fire, pastors attacked, one was killed, one more was burnt alive while another was gang raped, all this followed the night of August 23, when the VHP leader, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati and his four associates were killed by a group armed assassins while celebrating Janmastami at Jaleshpata Ashram." Further while quoting the report, in Kandhamal district alone, 27,000 people became refugees and had started living in camps while 101 churches were burnt. The team met several women who were in advanced stage of their pregnancy. A women in her pregnancy from village Raikula said, "I was pregnant when they came, I ran. I miscarried the baby." Further, another women who is nine months pregnant said, "They killed my father-in-law and were searching my husband who is a pastor. They could not find him because he had already left." Taking the story of barbarism as narrated by the report forward, "one man Purender Nayak of Nilungia went back to see the condition of his house. They killed him and cut his body into pieces. The VHP, Bajrang Dal and RSS are coming from other districts and making the Kandhas to do this."

According to the same report, a Hindu Dasrat Pradhan was killed because he preached amity between Hindus and Christians. The Kandhamal violence is an example of rare cruelty. State government, its administration and police conniving with armed gangsterism. Government of India did not do its duty. The Home Minister visited the place late. The Central Government did not use its constitutional prerogative under article 355 to compel the State Government to take action.

After Kandhamal, it was the turn of Christians in Karnataka to face the wrath of right-wing communal forces. Bajrang Dal activists vandalised seven churches and a house in Mangalore, Udipi and Chikmangalur districts. The violence continued in Karnataka. Ultimately, it crossed the border and tension gripped Kasargod district of Kerala where mob attacked a missionary run kindergarten school. As commented by 'The Hindu', "the attack in Kandhamal have all the makings of a systematic planned assault on the minority community. The coordinated violence spread across several districts, could not have been the handy work of a stray element working in isolation." In Madhya Pradesh too, violence had erupted. **It was clearly a pre-election exercise to consolidate Hindu chauvinism to gain electoral advantage. The RSS with all its outfits should be hauled up for the criminality.**

During 2008 alone there had been 63 bomb blasts taking a toll of around 250 lives. The latest was the bloodiest blast in Assam killing over 75 people. There are reports that the heinous crime perpetrated by Muslim fundamentalists has been aided and abetted by fundamentalist forces across the border, from Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The repeated terrorist attacks has exposed fully the total failure of country's intelligence agencies, central and state. The Union Home Ministry claims that it has unearthed the plot and has been able to locate the mastermind after every incident of violence. But facts speak otherwise. It is unfortunate that a particular community is being identified with terrorism and undue harassment is meted out to them. This is bound to be a political blunder. On the other hand, Sangh Parivar has unleashed a minority bait campaign. Top BJP leaders, including L.K. Advani and Rajnath Singh, have been at the head of the maligning propaganda. While the investigating agencies seek to underplay the role of different outfits of Sangh Parivar in the blasts, the revelation according to reports about the Malegaon bomb blasts speak of their involvement. **AITUC unwaveringly shall fight fundamentalism, terrorism, and violence of all shades and colour seeking to defend the integrity and unity of the nation.**

The recent happenings in Maharashtra, attack on the North Indian examinees, lynching a worker in the train, signals the rise of another brand of barbaric chauvinism, whose emergence is too dangerous to be ignored. The State Government has not taken care to protect the security of the linguistic minority in the State. AITUC stands to fight fundamentalism and terrorism of all shades and hues, as also chauvinism seeks to unite the working class, irrespective of their caste, creed and religion, unwaveringly fight the rise of fundamentalism and terrorism and protect the national unity and secular character of the nation. The national political scenario is increasingly becoming complex and complicated, growing economic distress, rise of communal threat and increase in terrorist attack must be simultaneously fought with broadest unity and the trade union movement must play a leading role in the crucial period ahead of us not only to protect the interest of the working people but also fight unwaveringly against all divisive forces, communal elements, and terrorist groups.

Organisational Reports – Account of Activities

Last three years have been truly eventful and tumultuous as well. Momentous has been **AITUC being adjudged as the third largest trade union of the country.** It has really spread out all around, most significant has been its advance among the unorganised labour, particularly among the contract workers. In defence and aviation and in construction, anganwadi. It has also expanded among the women home workers, private security guards, transport and a number of other sectors. AITUC has strengthened itself in the organised as well, in public and private sector. Working women have been drawn closer to AITUC in a number of States. In crisis ridden Kashmir, AITUC has been able to set up a number of powerful unions. Far flung Sikkim has not been outside AITUC's influence, the process of registration of unions have been initiated despite the bureaucratic difficulties. Young trade union activists have rallied around AITUC in Gurgaon, Noida and many other places. There have been significant expansion of its bases in different States.

Fulfilling the long cherished dream, AITUC has finally set up **its own headquarter in the capital** of the country, a 4-storeyed spa-

cious building on the main thorough fare of the city, fully financed by the workers themselves.

AITUC has implemented the most crucial task assigned by the 38th Conference held in New Delhi having organised the **massive unorganised workers rally**, maybe the biggest turnout of the working people in the recent period in the cithadel of power of the country. It was all red, red all around, may be reaching out to the sky. The ill-clad, half-fed, marginalised working masses marched ahead with determination almost capturing a part of the metropolis for presenting their charter to the Speaker of Lok Sabha and Prime Minister of the country. They have in fact stormed Delhi to demand the right to life, asking the government to become alive of their distress. The primary producers of wealth of the nation claimed reasonable share of the value they generate, minimum wage, social security, maternity benefit, right to form trade union. They protested against the violations of the labour laws, raised slogans against atrocities perpetrated by the cronies of capitalism. It was a unique spectacle of the downtrodden people invading the town, speaking out their agony and asking the state to intervene ensuring their economic empowerment.

Adding another commendable chapter to the account of its activities, AITUC led a country-wide campaign among the masses of the people, popularising the most crucial set of national demands including curb on price rise, immediate enactment of comprehensive welfare legislation for the unorganised labour, for the universal maternity benefit. They protested against indiscriminate privatization. **The petition to the parliament signed by nearly a crore of people was presented to the Honourable Speaker by a large delegation representing AITUC.**

To add further, the **All India General Strike on 20th August, 2008** is really a landmark in the recent history of trade union movement of our country. Called upon by the sponsoring committee to go on strike, the outreach of the call have been beyond anticipation. Deplorably, INTUC and BMS did not support the agitation, rather

opposed the programme. They had in fact been outmaneuvered by a large number of their supporters in a number of places. As expected the strike was total in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. Not unexpectedly, it was almost the same in Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Assam, even in Goa. Closely followed by Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi. Response in Karnataka was remarkable. While analysing the event, the conclusion is, that no state in the country had remained outside the orbit of agitation.

Bank and insurance rather the financial sector was closed totally. Coal production was deeply affected. Telecom strike was complete. Air service was even partial. Not lagging behind, power, and oil had responded to the call of strike. Public and private transport had come to a grinding halt in many places. Defence production was widely affected. Unorganised workers gallantly responded, disrupting railway communication, even road traffic. In the industrial areas around Delhi, many industrial enterprises have come to a close. Morale of the striking workers were high, mood was upbeat; public support was worth reckoning. **Finally, the strike was a mighty protest against the galloping price rise, also a spontaneous outburst against the genesis of the economic policy pursued by the Congress-led UPA government.** All India Trade Union Congress played its glorious role in organising the strike in collaboration with the brotherly trade unions. The well coordinated campaign that had preceded the strike was in all sense deep rooted, it had inspired the working people to rise in protest against the tyranny, against the aggressive mood of the corporates. To give further details, lakhs of posters were printed; hand bills were prepared; innumerable meetings were held inspiring the working masses. **Unity in action was truly achieved. The strike with its massive participation holds out the inherent potentiality of united mass action of the Indian working masses to be able to confront and challenge the authoritarian bourgeoisie and its political hegemony.**

Looking back down the sequence of events while refreshing the memory, the campaign for peoples' charter to parliament was immensely stimulated by the memorable satya graha on 4th and 5th

December, 2007 all over the country, lakhs of toiling people spontaneously participated, raising slogans against deprivations, poverty, price rise, and capitalist tyranny braving lathi charge and the arrest at the call of the sponsoring committee. To remember, AITUC had published a pictorial review highlighting the massive participation across the country.

Earlier to the 20th August, 2008 General Strike, there was another country wide action called by the Sponsoring Committee on 14th December, 2006. The massive march to Parliament on 23rd November, 2006 had in fact made the strike more widespread. AITUC played an important role in ensuring the success of the General Strike.

Working masses in fact had been relentlessly on move, opposing the capitalist outrage at different levels, sometimes marching ahead, on occasions also retreating. Working class by any means has not taken the capitalist tyranny lying down. **Even then to be honest, trade union movement collectively has not succeeded in giving effective shape and form to the growing indignation among the toiling people. Much has been done, more remains to be done. Faltering can only be at the peril.**

Creditably enough, Tamil Nadu unit of AITUC had led a total strike of 13,000 contract labour working in Neyveli project single handed for 15 days demanding indoor medical facility in the hospital of the project and a commitment on gradual absorption of those who are on contract, obviously along with the demand for increased wage. The united might of the contract workers succeeded in realising substantially their demands. There have been agitations among the contract workers in Bokaro Steel Plant and also in coal industry in some areas. In National Mineral Development Corporation, the United Federation of the Workers has successfully worked for the improvement of the working conditions of the contract labour. The Oil Federation has in the same way initiated the move to be able to organise the contract labour working in the oil industry. There was an all India convention of contract workers in the courtyard of VP House, Delhi in support of their demands at the initiative of the sponsoring committee drawing the attention of the nation to the problems being

faced by them whose number was swelling every day across the country.

Mention has to be made of the struggle of the contract workers of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore led by AITUC. Nearly 7,000 workers were on strike for 7 days. They had won a significant victory, their wages had increased by Rs.3,000 per month.

The jute workers of West Bengal, nearly 2 lakhs, had been on strike for as many as 63 days for the payment of entitled dearness allowance according to the rise of Consumer Price Index. Incidentally, the jute barons had been defaulting in the payment of dearness allowance for years. The jute workers of West Bengal had courageously responded to the united call of the trade unions for a prolonged period. The strike was subsequently withdrawn on partial settlement. Not surprisingly, since the jute management has again been defaulting in fulfilling their assurance, the jute workers are again on agitation. The jute industry, one of the most traditional labour intensive industries of the country, by no means a sunset industry is manufacturing jute products utilising the golden fibre and has become the lifeline of the industrial complex of the state. What is an irony, the jute traders having taken over the industry refrained from investing even a small part of their profit for the modernisation of the industry. Most delinquent as it has become the jute industry violates the labour laws with impunity, avoid taxes, default in the payment of statutory dues. They have improved production reducing manpower, earning fabulous profit. Thousands of workers are forced to work in jute industry without their names recorded in the live register. Despite the jute industry catering to government orders, significantly central government failed miserably to take any action to discipline the delinquent management.

The tea workers of West Bengal nearly 2.5 lakhs have been on one-day strike and pressed their long standing demands of having increase in wages, dearness allowance and other benefits. The daily wage of the workers had increased after the strike.

There has been increased initiative by the Federation of Anganwadi

Employees for the improvement of their wage level and working condition. Thousand of Anganwadi women have squatted overnight under the open sky in the streets of Bhubaneshwar, remarkably forcing the government to concede their demand for the increase of their emoluments. The valiant victory had inspired the Anganwadi unions of other states. There have been large number of rallies of Anganwadi employees in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra. The Anganwadi employees in Karnataka had been unitedly carrying on agitation for the increase of financial benefits. In Andhra, the movement is coming up steadily. The 15 lakh Anganwadi women constitute a potent social force for carrying out their social obligation, implementing massive health care programme throughout the country. They need to be unionized. Their struggle for enlarging their benefits must be carried forward so that they are able to do their duty to the nation better. AITUC stands for strengthening its initiative to improve its work and organisation among this downtrodden working women of the country. The emerging opportunity for drawing this strategic segment of the working women into the fold of the mainstream of the trade unionism has to be explored without delay.

The recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission were in tune with the prescriptions of World Bank/IMF. The Commission made a number of retrograde recommendations particularly with regard to eventual privatization of railways, defence, etc. A highly retrograde recommendation pertains to direct recruitment to Class IV posts in future. The Commission had recommended downright abolition of the entire category of Class IV staff. AITUC condemned the recommendation of the Commission and urged upon Central government employees organizations to struggle against the retrograde recommendations, assuring them of support and solidarity. With some minor changes, the recommendations of the Commission have been implemented by the government unilaterally.

All India Defence Employees Federation (AIDEF) while fighting the decision of the government to allow introduction of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the defence industry has been able to build up effective agitation in different parts of the country. The infusion of FDI in the defence production endangers the security of the nation

by opening up defence secrets to the foreign corporates. It is also an attempt in the direction of privatization of the defence industry. A proposal to grant Raksha Udyog Ratna (RUR) status to the private industries and to corporatise the 40 ordnance factories are under consideration of the Government of India. The Defence employees are on war path against this retrograde policy of the government. The Conference notes with concern the move of the government to allow private ownership of defence enterprises.

Some of the experience of the States

In all these years, the zeal for developing struggle at different levels undoubtedly has stimulated. Giving examples, in Goa, local struggles have intensified in different sectors including the port of the State. Other industrial units had also moved into action. Trade unions have organized rallies and demonstrations. Going still further, Rajasthan did not lag behind. A massive rally proceeded to the State Secretariat calling upon the Government to act firmly to protect the trade union rights of the workers, also to consider the demand of the transport and other sections of the workers. A deputation met the Chief Minister. She gave assurance as usual. Ultimately it turned out to be a hoax. Recently, there was a call for indefinite strike by the transport workers demanding implementation of the recommendations of Sixth Pay Commission. They had been assured by the government, the call for strike was consequently withdrawn. Earlier, transport workers had launched another agitation against privatization. The trade unions had succeeded in realizing a firm commitment from the government suspending privatization.

To add more Bihar must be complimented for stepping up its trade union activism particularly in the unorganized sector. In the organized sector the power workers led by their federation had observed one-day strike plunging the entire state in darkness. The union led by AITUC demanded postponement of the implementation of the division of the State Electricity Board. Similarly, power workers had gone into 3-day strike in Punjab. The story being the same, AITUC was at the head of the agitation. There was also a one-day strike in the power sector in Andhra. In all, more than 60,000 work-

ers participated in these strikes. Agitation of the power workers against privatization, opposing the implementation of the Electricity Act is continuing with vengeance in different States. Recently, a massive dharna took place in Delhi under the auspices of the United Forum of the Power Workers. Significantly, the struggle of the power workers assumes increasing national importance since the enforcement of the Electricity Act, all out privatization, splitting of the State Electricity Board is bound to increase cost as it had in Delhi and Orissa. It will deeply affect the power supply to agriculture, undermine rural electrification. Therefore the crusade of the power workers against the Electricity Act needs to be transformed into a national campaign.

Going ahead, mention has to be made of the 4-day strike of workers and employees of Airport Authority of India in January, 2006 opposing privatization of airports. The movement was not a failure, while the privatization of Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad airports could not be stalled, the movement had been able to extract a clear assurance that the other existing airports including Kolkata and Chennai shall remain in the public sector.

Admirably, Kerala AITUC has advanced, increased its membership, the number of unions multiplied. In the traditional industries like cashew, coir, rubber, tea, activities have improved. In rubber recently, workers have been able to increase their wages. The tea industry, as usual, is facing sickness. The AITUC union has mounted its campaign to seek a rehabilitation programme.

There are many more examples of heroic battles. The agitation of bank employees is a landmark. Most inspiring has been the prolonged agitation of the bank employees throughout the country primarily against the delinquent reform of the financial sector by the government. In all, there have been 6 national strikes including one 2-day strike. The Catholic Syrian bank in Kolkata had gone on 94-day strike for trade union rights; and Lord Krishna bank had all-India strike for 46 days against merger with another bank. All India Bank Employees Association creditably led the struggle of the bank employees forging all-out unity against the economic policy of the government; significantly against privatization, disinvestment and merger.

In fact, bank employees had played a commendable role as a vital component of the mainstream of the trade union movement of the country. It is an embodiment of inexhaustible trade union activism against capitalist oppression, for the improvement of the working condition of the 6 lakh bank employees. Others in the financial sector have also been active. Particular mention has to be made of the agitation by the General Insurance employees opposing outsourcing, for the integration of 4 units of the industry. There is a need to unite the total workforce of the financial sector to strengthen the battle against the government's economic policies.

Enumerating further the strikes and struggles that had taken place in the country during the last 3 years, important is the All India strike of the agricultural workers called by BKMU. Mention must be made of the strikes of NALCO workers against disinvestment. Coming to Haryana, following a lathi charge on the transport employees, transport workers had gone into strike for couple of days protesting against the police highhandedness demanding withdrawal of suspension of their leaders. There are more instances of strike, in Himachal, in Solan Watch Factory, in the Agricultural University in Pant Nagar in Utharanchal, in Hero Honda factories in Gurgaon and Dharahera, workers had gone on strike. The contract workers in Honda factory had also struck work demanding increase in their emoluments. The drivers and helpers of petroleum tankers in Assam had also gone on strike demanding protection against terrorism.

While concluding the account of struggles, launched by the workers in different parts of the country in the last 3 years, the lesson clearly is that the workers who are permanent, more so those who are on contract are increasingly being drawn into action in many areas, industries and states. The mood of the workers in a situation of ruthless capitalist development may not be too upbeat but when the opportunity emerges, unity is forged, workers move out in action. A number of general strikes that have taken place in the last 3 years seek to raise the moral high. AITUC pledges to carry forward the struggle and agitation in close collaboration with the brotherly trade unions. **While antagonism among the workers is brew-**

ing the contradiction between the interest of the workers and the policy of the government is sharpening, the struggles are being intensified. AITUC pledges to spearhead the battles.

Strike is not the only form of struggle, relentless agitation takes manifold form. There have been innumerable rallies and agitations throughout the country. Most impressive are the rallies in Bihar, mostly of unorganized workers. Remarkable has been the demonstration of the female domestic workers in Mumbai, as also the rally of the diamond workers in Surat. Patiala had seen one of the biggest rallies of the recent period of the transport, power and unorganized workers. Similarly in Bangalore the rally of transport workers fighting against curtailment of trade union rights is remarkable. In Himachal a march to Assembly in Shimla had taken place. By any standard, it was significant. In Bhubaneswar, a huge rally had taken place against the decision of the government to hand over iron ore mines to Posco, a corrupt South Korean multinational company. Sizeable was the mobilization of the mid-day meal workers in Bangalore. It was all a women programme. Again in the city of Bangalore, there was a rally of Central Public Sector Undertakings workers. The AITUC of West Bengal held an impressive rally in Kolkata against Central government policies, against the violation of labour laws in the state.

There are more illustrations of prolonged battle of the working people. While the power workers in Punjab had prolonged agitation, going on strike, holding demonstrations against the move of the government to privatize State Electricity Board. Compelling the government to postpone the privatization, the employees are moving forward. More heroically thousands of workers of Force Motors workers in Pune had continued agitation braving corporate terror and police hooliganism for the recognition of their union. The domestic workers in Maharashtra have rallied around their union, holding one after another rally on the approach road to the State Government Secretariat, in a desperate bid to win better living condition, also for curbing violence at the workplace. The Azad Maidan rally in Mumbai of the unorganized labour must find a special mention. In Jharkhand

the local struggle of the industrial and unorganized workers have registered a significant success. The struggle of the workers of iron ore mines led by United Mineral Workers Union at the initiative of Comrade Laru Zunko had been able to win their demands after a long strike and agitation. In Khargpur, West Bengal, the mood of the workers had been upbeat, registering success in their struggle holding rallies and demonstrations. In Madhya Pradesh too, thousands of workers, marching across the streets of Bhopal had courted arrest protesting against the violation of labour laws. The Bidi workers in the State are carrying forward their struggles with determination for more wages.

While narrating the experience of the last 3 years, it is important to make a mention of an undaunting struggle of the KSRTC workers in Karnataka against slaughtering of trade union rights. There is a need to develop solidarity action in support of the KSRTC workers. Further reporting to the 39th Session of AITUC, the high morale of the employees of Anganwadi was reflected in the 2nd National Conference that was held in Hyderabad with larger participation and bigger representation. The Federation of the Anganwadi Employees have successfully worked for the advance of the movement in this sector. It is unfortunate that several States are failing in organizing the Anganwadi workers.

In the last three years, if there have been strikes, rallies and demonstrations, there have been seminars and conferences also for unleashing political campaign. A national seminar on universal entitlement of maternity benefits for the working women was organized in Kolkata with large participation of the states. Also at the initiative of the Working Women Forum, another national seminar was held in Parliament annexe complex in New Delhi on the "challenge to the working women in an era of globalisation". The forum of working women is active. It has its journal. But more active the forum should be. The journal should reflect truly the problems of the mass of the working women. It is urgent that the Forum holds its second national conference at the earliest. It is a pity that a number of States are yet to set up the Working Women Forum.

Trade unions, AITUC in particular have been campaigning for alternative economic policy, a people's budget for the peoples welfare. It had campaigned for a new development strategy for ushering in inclusive growth. Striving to popularize its alternative proposals for the budget, AITUC sponsored a national seminar in New Delhi on "How the Budget should look like". Leading economists, bureaucrats, political leaders, trade union activists participated in the seminar and focused on the need for having a targeted policy to eradicate poverty, creation of job, employment security, for a larger budget with larger allocation for generating rapid inclusive growth.

Significantly, voice against violation of labour laws was raised in Parliament. So also the basic problems of the Indian working class was duly reflected in the parliamentary deliberations. The parliamentary standing committee on labour in all its report to parliament had highlighted the impoverishment of the working masses. Possibly all these had their effect, Labour Minister convened a meeting of the State Labour Ministers, along with the representatives of the Central trade unions. **The deliberations further corroborated the complaint of violation of labour law by the management with impunity, and hence, supplemented the demand for stringent enforcement of these laws across the country.**

Adding further, AITUC had initiated a campaign for the politicalisation of its ranks. Six regional study classes covering all the states with the participation of nearly 350 leaders had taken place. AITUC had increased its publications. A topical booklet has been released recently. Two pictorial brochures have been published graphically illustrating the wide participation of the people in the rail roko and rasta roko programme on 4th and 5th of December, 2007 and also depicting the success of the general strike on 20th August, 2008. Another pictorial publication was brought out highlighting AITUC's activities during the year 2006. The fortnightly journals, Hindi and English, have improved their standard. A number of popular lectures have been organized, particularly in Chennai and Kolkata.

It is needless to add, the trade unionism in the contemporary

situation urgently requires to be qualitatively reoriented. While instilling fighting zeal among the working masses against the capitalist exploitation, it is indeed important that trade unionism spreads among the unorganized. Those who are on contract, who are casual, who work at home, catering to the outsourced orders of the corporates, who work in the tiny enterprises, also in the sweated industries, employing less than 10 workers, particularly, women, tribal, Scheduled Castes, Muslims, need to be drawn more effectively into the mainstream of the struggle against the capitalist order, its exploitation and managerial tyranny. The slogan of social change, a classless society, replacing the capitalist order need to be imbibed by the trade union movement, the new direction needs to be grasped by the organization.

While concluding the organizational note, it needs to be admitted that AITUC had activated itself at all its levels, much has been done, much more are left to be done, its structure had widened, there are many areas AITUC is yet to reach out to.

AITUC center sought to do its duty, while at the same time it has to be admitted that it suffers from acute shortage of cadres at all levels, it has failed to induct additional manpower to improve its work, therefore, the functioning of the AITUC center has its own serious limitations. **There is an urgent need to improve its functioning of the Central leadership, having more effective cadres working at the center to strengthen its contact with the States, help the States to improve their functioning and stimulate its initiative to mobilize the working people on the issues of national importance.**

While AITUC has advanced undoubtedly, but there are multiple problems that must be attended to. The State Committees act as a vital link between the unions at the base and leading bodies at the Centre. The number of AITUC State Committees have not been performing too well. There is a lack of team functioning at all levels with individualism being preponderant. Absence of collective leadership is ominous. Recruitment of capable cadres is a crucial issue. Replacement of the seniors with junior personnel is imperative. The cadre

development is a priority. As the situation is, young educated middle class cadres are generally not joining the trade union movement as full-time activists. Maybe, they are not attracted. It is important that an alternative is explored seeking to develop leading workers as the mainstay of trade unionism. Gradual promotion of the worker cadres to the leadership at different levels is an urgent task. A human development policy needs to be practiced in the trade union movement to foster the growth of younger cadres so that the inherent gap in the organization is not widened but bridged smoothly. The carrying out of the task rests with the existing team of leaders.

Lamentably there is a gender bias in the organization. The pernicious trend needs to be reversed. While the women constitute a significant segment of the working population, composition of leadership reflects a disproportionate percentage. Promotion of the young women cadres and their integration with the set of leadership is a job that needs to be done with priority. Special move is urgently required to be undertaken to induct tribals, SCs and STs, and muslims in the organizations and make room for their promotion.

Corruption, individualism and anarchism must be weeded out. Organisational discipline has to be enforced at all levels.

As the trade unions, the elementary form of class organization relentlessly work to intensify the class struggle for bringing about a radical change in the society, for the improvement of living conditions of the working people, demanding a better share of the wealth that is produced, the organization that is having this historic perspective must be sought to be energized with the infusion of young blood constantly. Otherwise, it loses its vitality, mobility and militancy.

There are many other shortcomings if we seriously examine our record for the last 3 years. The payment of affiliation fee is still irregular, the dominant tendency is to pay the amount in bulk on the eve of the conference. Under payment is a perennial disease. Filing of the annual returns to the State Labour Department is generally defaulted. Annual general meetings of the unions are not held; accounts not properly maintained; and collectivism not practiced. Neither the AITUC

center nor the State committees have succeeded in bringing about a significant change. The activation of the unions, the democratization as also politicalisation is essential. AITUC has not been able to correct this anomaly. It is indeed necessary to remind that it is not the workers who should come to the leaders always and beg for their advice and support. It should be other way round. Leaders should visit regularly the factories, workers *bustees*, their union offices to find out how the workers needed to be helped. The relationship between the leaders and the workers should be meaningful, cordial and intimate and the link with the masses should be living so that the leadership is able to understand the problems more objectively.

Many states are having their journals, but the circulation is limited. Even the central journals have not been able to improve its readership. Financially, AITUC has been able to raise funds but more funds are needed to meet the rising overhead costs, the increasing maintenance cost of the building also to find resources for strengthening our presence more significantly among the unorganized working people. Funds are indeed needed for financing national campaign and agitation. Most of the states suffer from resource crunch. The collection of funds at all levels at regular intervals need to be chartered out, remembering adequate funds are needed to move forward the struggle against capitalism and its political hegemony. Workers must be asked more to pay funds for the AITUC at all levels, collection has to be regularised.

Conclusion: On The Road Ahead

India's economic situation is too grim. The convulsion of global financial crisis has hit India severely. The presence of the public sector had reduced the impact, even then, the turbulence had made its presence felt. Coupled with high rise inflation, the recession is playing havoc. The forex reserve has fallen. The FII's are fleeing. The sensex has tumbled down too badly. The market confidence has suffered a severe beating. The captains of industry have started talking loudly on the soft option of job cut and wage cut.

According to ASSOCHAM release, the post Diwali employment

scenario is fraught with immediate danger of large scale downsizing. At least, in the seven specific strategic sectors, steel, cement, IT, financial and brokerage services as also in construction, aviation and real estate business. The management has already drawn up a plan to curtail workforce by 25% to 30%. If Diwali had been dampened as a fall out of the financial crisis, still worse days await the working people. There is also a demand for change of monetary policy, discontinuation of the stringent monetary measures and reduction of interest rates by at least 3%. The corporates as usual are not ready to absorb the shock, they seek to pass on the burden on to the toiling masses, at the same time, they ask the government to provide the bail-out package, for easy advance at a low cost without for a moment considering the option of drawing upon their reserves. The greed for unlimited profit is ingrained in the capitalist system, the corporates are not willing to compromise on low profit to tide over the critical period of time, bottom line is too sacrosanct to be allowed to be impaired upon. The society must pay for the misdeeds, the global capitalism has perpetrated.

The government's policy of liquidity infusion, releasing nearly Rs.2 lakh crores to the banking sector, further liberalising cash reserve ratio, reducing Repo Rate has not been able to prevent the blood bath at the bourses. The nose dive of the sensex has not been halted. Short run improvement is no sign of revival. The market confidence is fatally shaken. The capitalist economy so intensely tormented does not correct itself on its own left to the market forces, without the active intervention of the state. The response of government of India, its disaster management mechanism has proved to be ineffective. If casino capitalism is held responsible for the downfall in America, the regulatory failure has facilitated the mammoth slide as Dr. Manmohan Singh is reported to have declared in the first closed session of the Asia-Europe Meeting at Beijing, he should recount how his government is set to act salvaging the hard hit economy. Pampering the FIs, liberalising the Participatory Notes, losing sight of rampant short selling, the misuse of derivatives, even mobilising social savings deposited with the insurance companies, to revive the stock

market, going still further releasing the provident fund accumulation for investment in the stock market, a few to be mentioned, are all steps totally in the wrong direction. Government is actually surrendering to the blackmail of the corporates. While Dr. Singh referred to the economically damaging role of the excessive speculation, it is expected that he had realised also the damage of reckless speculation that had gripped the secondary market of the country. Otherwise, sensex moving as high as 21,000 points was not possible. When super hyper volatility was pointed out as a sign of imminent danger, his close colleague, Mr. Chidambaram had the smart answer, economic fundamentals were too strong to take care of any contingency. It is Dr. Singh's government that had actually pampered casino gambling in India, made the banks, insurance companies, and public sector invest to fuel speculative rise of the share prices. The government hand in gloves with the corporates had promoted paper prosperity, making money in the air, even it allowed the corporates to play the devil's game to artificially jack up the value of their wealth.

The country that had the largest number of hungry people of the world, had one of the most booming secondary markets in place. The dichotomy was sought to be overlooked. Taking forward the story of acute depravation and unusual concentration of wealth, a country having 836 million people, who are poor and vulnerable, 394.9 million unorganised labour with no minimum wage and social security, 90% of the agriculture labour, the largest segment of the unorganised who were mostly landless, one lakh mothers die every year during childbirth, 5 lakh people die of tuberculosis, diahorrea, malaria annually; 30,000 schools without buildings, and one lakh without blackboard is having 533 billionnaires and millionaires having a total asset of Rs.12,32,135 crore.

Indian economy rested on a weak foundation, a glaring fact, the government always ignored. The agriculture perpetually in crisis, 77% of the people living in the backyard of the economy having little purchasing power, unemployment almost reaching the point of social explosion, outsourcing and contractualisation further aggravat-

ing the already critical labour market, 76% of the establishments, 31.74 million working without power, having medieval mode of production, are only few examples to establish India's growth is essentially lopsided. If the earning of the people who are majority in the society is too low to be reflected in the effective demand of the market, if market is effectively influenced by the behaviour pattern of merely 23% of the population, government panders mindless and senseless consumerism and commercialism, in a case like that the economy is bound to suffer from stunted growth and impaired development.

The remedy is to expand, enlarge, stimulate the domestic demand, boost up the national market, improve production, step up productivity, create more jobs, increase the purchasing power and improve consumption level of the poor people, enhance the supply of essentials at reasonable price. The crucial task is to strengthen the economic fundamentals and at the same time improve human fundamentals. This perspective calls for stepping up massive investment for the productive sector, for the building up of social infrastructure and reviving agriculture. The public sector making profit should be drawn in the national revival plan, investing their available surplus funds for expansion and execution of new projects. The state must act with decisiveness, diligence and purpose, stop the calamity from engulfing the nation, prevent the corporate conspiracy of downsizing and ensure steps to curb price rise and boost the domestic market.

Today capitalism does not seek to maximise profit producing more goods and commodities, expanding sales. The new strategy is to generate wealth doing financial transactions, making money in the air, visiting speculative adventure. It is the morbidity that has brought the disaster. It is the millions who are left to become the victims of the calamity.

Capitalism shall not die on its own, it has to be fought and replaced. The policy that is being pursued by the world capitalism is destined to aggravate the crisis, bringing more misery to the people,

create unemployment, inflation and dilution of social security programmes. It may lead to devaluation of national currencies. It is how the moribund capitalism shall thrive to live on. If Marx is being rediscovered in Germany, it is Marxism that has exposed the dynamics of capitalist exploitation, presented the humanity the theory of surplus value. The anarchy and morbidity of the capitalist system is more and more being exposed. As visualised by V.I. Lenin, the working people has to play the leading role in changing the society. Socialism remains as it always was our sacred goal.

Trade unions must while fighting capitalist aberrations, the attack of the corporates, growing threat of retrenchment, lay off, wage cut, at the same time work for the improvement of the living condition of the huge mass of unorganised labour, including the working women must unleash relentless struggle for bringing out a new economic policy for more job and inclusive growth. Trade union movement needs thorough overhaul and reorientation imbibing the ideals of class struggle and social change.

AITUC seeks to build up broadest unity at the same time seek to strengthen itself for developing mighty struggle of the working people to combat and confront the capitalist onslaughts.

Report on International Situation and Struggles

H. Mahadevan, Dy. General Secretary

Attacks on the Working Class continued unabated.

During the last few years, under the influence of neo-liberal globalization the attack on the rights and conditions of the workers continued. For instance, the minimum wages declined. In several Latin American countries, it fell by 60% in Mexico and by 85% in Peru. Besides inflation and weaker union bargaining power in these countries the main reason behind the declining minimum wages is the deliberate policy to abandon minimum wage legislation for the sake of "stabilization and adjustment". "In several African countries, real wages became downwardly flexible. The inequality in income within the countries and across the countries have widened over the years in the Asia-Pacific Region also and these have been opposed and protested by trade unions / workers in most countries.

Unjust wars of aggression by the US led imperialists in Iraq, Afghanistan; sanctions and blockades against Cuba, threat of wars against Iran, DPR Korea, Middle-East, attempts of toppling of the elected governments in Venezuela, Bolivia etc. were continued, despite several UN Resolutions and overwhelming world opinion. The Military spending had escalated several fold, depriving the workers and common peoples social security and welfare to jeopardy. The wars in Iran and Afghanistan have become super-profits for those involved in the manufacture and sale of armaments and air fighters. The world's top five armament and aircraft companies based in the US-Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Northrop, Grummon, Raytheon and General Dynamics-have seen their profits zoom up by anything between 100 to 600 percent; they sold over 188 billion dollars worth of

weaponry, making in 2007 over 13 billion dollar profit. Similarly, European companies which were running under loses in 2002 over a billion dollars went on to earn 2 billion dollars profits in 2007. Deadliest wars profited them.

Under the 'market economy' policies, most human employment is not organized around social usefulness, but around financial profit. Goods and services are not distributed according to need, but according to the financial viability of buyers. The earth's resources are not exploited with their renewal or impact on the environment in mind, but according to the profits they generate. Jobs are not used as a means of improving well-being for all, but as a means for making profits for the few.

This abrogation of the human essence is fraught with consequences such as:

- "(a) The pharmaceutical industry makes more and more convenience medicines in the developed countries but refusing to produce the medicines needed by poor populations.**
- (b) Hunger and malnourishment in the developing world, though it could be easily eradicated, has become an economic weapon for the big powers and the multinationals. Out of 854 million undernourished people in the world, 820 million live in developing countries (India has more number of undernourished people than even Sub-Saharan Africa).**
- (c) Shanty towns and slums are not abolished, despite the fact that it would be possible to provide decent housing in amenable surroundings, without recourse to property and financial speculation.**
- (d) In the poorest countries, most jobs are to be found in the so-called informal economy / unorganised sector, and literacy, disease, child labour and prostitution are widespread.**

- (e) ***Increasingly millions of workers are risking their lives to take the emigration route (largely by illegal means) and often find themselves in a deplorable situation in the host country, resulting in conflicts, racism and repression.***
- (f) ***In the developed countries a new kind of pervasive poverty is appearing and now a significant part of their populations are suffering similar pressures to the peoples of the developing world.***
- (g) ***The capitalists have made job intensification and job reduction their main means of adjustment. The more companies declare redundancies, the more shareholders earn and the greater their return on capital. They want at the same time to keep ever greater shares of the profits provided by labour and to shed future jobs in fresh rounds of retrenchments and outsourcing.***
- (h) ***The corporate world has cultivated job insecurity and flexibility, i.e., subcontracting, self-employment, and agencies for temporary workers. Then there are part-time contracts, unpaid overtime and short-term contracts, all intended to serve the needs of the company and to maximize company profits."***

World Bank attack on Collective Bargaining in Public Sector

The World Bank has identified the apex level bipartite fora in public sector as the source of resistance against privatization. Thus to eliminate these barriers, the Bank has been prescribing steps aimed at dismantling these apex fora.

Resistances and working class Actions around the world

Several national trade unions, sectoral and industrial federations around the world have been launching protest and strike actions, some of which are highlighted:

- (a) 'Farmers March' and demonstration demanding use of tax money to help them to pay rising costs organized by JAKOCHI (Japan) in August 2008.
- (b) (i) General Strike shook Peru on 9th July under CGTP against the neo-liberal policies of the Govt.
(ii) "The struggle waged by the General Confederation of Bolivian Trade Unions for the termination of the imperialist intervention in the internal economic policies of the pro-peoples policy of the EVO Morales Govt. of Bolivia. (USA wants to enact another Chile in Bolivia).
- (c) With the dawn of democracy in Pakistan the hated Industrial Relation Ordinance (IR 2002) was withdrawn which was the main demand of the TU Movement: minimum wages was also enhanced.
- (d) Zenroren, (Japan) fights for contingent workers (contract/casual workers); opening on 20th August, National Convention Workers Action Centre (CWAC).
- (e) **ACFTU, China organizes about 50 million unorganized workers which brings the ACFTU's membership to 209 million, the biggest national trade union centre in the world.**
- (f) A political demonstration of a 11,000 strong rally was organized in Iwakuni City Air Station on 1st December, 2007 in retaliation against the Japanese government's cut in subsidies for the city, **for having opposed to the deployment of US fighters.**
- (g) PAME (Greece) organized demonstration in 70 cities of Greece for the Social Security Rights, in November 2007.
- (h) In retaliation of the "No" in France in the national referendum on the anti-workers "EU Constitutional Treaty", recently the European Court of Justice decided in three cases that "compensation law and freedom of enterprises are more important

than labours and trade union rights". The Court gave verdicts that the "rights of organised labour cannot be opposed to the decision of a company to move parts of its production abroad". In other case, **"Court ruled in favour of Polish firm in Germany applying polish minimum wage to German workers in the construction industry"**.

- (i) Hundreds of thousands of local government workers (60,000) in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, Scotland strike for fair pay, **two thirds of them being women.**
- (j) Sweedish bus drivers went on a national strike in July 2008 and won salary increase, better working hours and daily rest period.
- (k) In mid July 2008, service workers at the University of California's 10 campuses and five hospitals went on a 5 days strike, rejecting the offer of the University of increase of \$11.5 and \$12 an hour, but insisting increase of \$ 15 an hour.
- (l) According to a 'white paper' published in Japan **24000 workers committed suicide in between 2004 & 2006 due to excessively long hours of work, arbitrary job cuts and the unstable status of the temporary workers.** A great resentment caused amongst Japanese workers.
- (m) In a crime against brick kiln workers in Lahore (Pakistan), the bonded workers were operated upon and their kidneys got removed by the employers and after the agitation of PBKLU, the police arrested owners.
- (n) In one month (June 2008) itself there were several struggles.
 - (i) Massive strike of French, workers led by CGT and CFTD, against Govts. reform programme on 35 hour work week and retirement pension. (A few years ago, the French students, subsequently backed by French workers, staged a massive resistance movement against the "First Employment Contract Law", which had to be finally repealed).

- (ii) Farm strike took toll on Argentina's soy crushers, and the MNCs run factories closed for 15 days because of no stock of soy to crush.
- (iii) In South Korea, increase in fuel prices fueled 13,000 truckers to go on strike and the Government offered compensation package to offset fuel and operating expenses.
- (iv) KCTU members urging the Govt. to renegotiate the 'US beef deal' voted overwhelmingly in the strike ballot (KCTU has 630,000 members)
- (v) The shell tank drivers, after a four day strike in England won a 14% settlement.
- (vi) For 12 days, members of the Canadian Auto workers union blocked the Corporate offices of General Motors, protesting GM's plan to close a truck plant there.
- (vii) Nigerian teachers went on Indefinite strike across the nation, initially after 3 days warning strike, demanding increase in salary and good welfare package.
- (o) In June 2008, 40,000 anti war protesters joined a protest rally in London, demanding withdrawal of all troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, that US should not attack Iran and Israel should end of the siege of Gaza.
- (p) Following the unrest of truckers, a Brazilian court ruled 8 hour work for truckers, as many were working 16 hours a day, and imposed a fine of US \$1000 on the companies violating this.
- (q) About 270,000 union members of Zenroren, Japan protested throughout Japan in March 08, under the "2008 Peoples Spring Struggle Joint Committee" against the unacceptable small increase offered by large corporations which make huge profits benefited from the Govt.s 'Corporation First Policy'.
- (r) Indian immigrant workers in US went on a series of protest actions, breaking the Indian US human trafficking chain and

went on Satyagraha holding rallies on their way to white House, throughout March 2008.

- (s) Philippines workers, led by KMU faced arrests, injuries by police, protesting against political killings, illegal detentions, intimidation, union busting, abductions, harassment inflicted on leaders, members, labour advocates etc, which was attracted by the UN Special Rapporteur.
- (t) Russian Ford workers went on 'relentless strike struggles in February 2007, and won 21% pay rise to new workers and 16% to experienced workers, besides concessions on pensions and working hours.
- (u) CARREFOUR super markets workers went to strike in Greece demanding reinstatement of the workers dismissed out of revenge after the General Strike on 12, December, 2007 were rehired.
- (v) In Australia, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) seafarers struck work for 9 days against the Teekay Shipping Gardlina International, which terminated the entire crew, won the demands of reinstatement.
- (w) The United force of workers in Belgium (FGTB) demonstrated their strength in November 2007, against the anti social policies of the EU.
- (x) **In the former USSR countries, after the collapse of the Soviet union, which was hailed by the capitalist world as a new era of democracy, freedom, unprecedented economic development under market economy etc. after 16 years the situation of the workers, peasants, youth, pensioners has considerably weakened.** The privatization policies have led to an economic collapse for the vast majority. Misery of unemployment, closures of factories, mines, hospitals schools and sell off of natural resources are threatening the very existence of these countries.

For example, (i) In Ukraine millions of renters are threatened with eviction because of the policies of privatizing the housing, massive destruction of labour force is witnessed in Maldivia; (ii) In Poland job losses are the order of the day; (iii) In (East) Germany, thousands of enterprises are closed; (iv) In former Yugoslavia, the working classes belonging to Serbia, Macedonia and Albania are not able to return to their jobs and continue to face the future of war, privatization/pillage and social decomposition; (v) In Bulgaria, tens of Thousands of teachers had to go on strike as the Govt. failed to respond to their demands. The workers of these countries also resisted.

World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)

AITUC being a class based organisation, is the founder – member of World Federation of Trade Unions, since 1945.

WFTU's 10 point priorities based on 'Havana Declaration'

The WFTU started on a new path based on the decisions of the XVth World Trade Union Congress held in Cuba in December 2005, entitled the HAVANA DECLARATION. Emerging from this, the following ten priorities of WFTU were evolved, towards the programmes followed over the last 3 years.

- “1. **The contemporary demands of the working class to be guided by the principles of class struggle and militant actions. Our movement does not accept the theories of rejecting class oriented struggles.**
2. WFTU believes in the independent Trade Union organizations from monopolies and transnational corporations.
3. There is a serious drawback in the issues of Democratic and Trade Union liberties due to employer terrorism and state violence.
4. **The struggle for peace, a principal task, in a period of imperialist madness. Mass anti-war movement and internationalism and workers solidarity are the key**

points, WFTU is in favour of the abolition and destruction of all nuclear weapons from all countries without exception.

5. The Labour & Trade Union Movement, developing a wide, mass movement, demands for a UN just and independent from the powerful of the earth.
6. Trade Union needs to obtain a constant front against bureaucracy and elitism. The principles of collectiveness, criticism and democratic functioning help the movement. Leaders ought to respect the base, respect ordinary workers.
7. **The necessity for workers to have access to and the right to knowledge, culture and education is more imperative than ever before. Trade Union education is a must. The TU movement should address youth, women, intellectuals and economic immigrants.**
8. Fight for the improvement of workers lives, for the solution of their economic, social security and labour demands. Struggle for abolition of exploitation of man by man; construction of a society without social injustice, without war, with democracy & freedom.
9. Struggle against cultural imperialism.
10. **Ready to cooperate and act along with other international trade union organizations, irrespective of existing ideological and political differences, for the promotion of the international working class interests. WFTU's fundamental principle is the promotion of unity of all workers".**

Greetings of the WFTU

General Secretary Com. George Mavrikos

Dear Comrades, Dear Brothers and sisters,

Allow me on behalf of the World federation of Trade Unions to address warm, sincere and militant greetings to the working class of India and the class-oriented trade-union movement of your country.

It is a special pleasure for us to participate to the 39th National Conference of AITUC which celebrated last October the 88 years since its foundation and we express our deepest congratulations for this successful course.

It is also meaning for us to be here because AITUC is among the founders of our International Organisation in 1945 and the strong supporter throughout the course of all these years. We feel great honour to be among brothers and comrades who trace a new path for the people of India and the working class worldwide through their struggles.

The relations between the AITUC and the WFTU are solid ones. They have a rich history, a creative present and a promising future. The WFTU after the 15th Congress, held three years ago, follows a new course. An important course of reconstruction and important action in the international trade union arena. To pave the way to this new course, the role of AITUC was a very important one.

It has pioneered for the change of course, on the strengthening of the militant and class-oriented characteristics, for the change of WFTU leadership. To overcome the delays, difficulties and mistakes of the recent past.

We thank the leadership of AITUC, its General Secretary comrade Gurudas Das Gupata, the President Com. Promod Gogoi, its supporters, its friends, its members and its cadres for this internationalist offer which is an expression of active solidarity in the class-oriented international trade union movement. We also thank Com. H. Mahadevan for his efforts during all these years in conducting the activities of the WFTU Regional Asia Pacific Office with much success. I can assure you comrades, that you all have the recognition and respect from everyone in the big international family of the WFTU.

The WFTU today has 180 affiliated trade unions from 95 countries in all continents and hundreds of friends everywhere in the world.

Dear colleagues,

We live in an era of capitalist globalization. The basic characteristics of this era, are the **big economic inequality, huge poverty for the many and accumulation of big wealth for the few**. The fights of developed capitalist states to keep under their economic, political and military control the entire third world.

Today, in the 21st century, 800 million people suffer from starvation. 200 million children live in conditions of complete penury and 115 million children do not go to school at all. Africa's debts are about \$230 billion! For Asia, Africa and Latin America debts are creating poverty, exploitation, and political and military dependence. According to the world Health Organization, life expectancy in developed countries is 71 years while the third world's life expectancy is approximately 38 years!

This is the real picture of globalization we experience in all continents. And today things are worse. The world community lives the consequences of the capitalist economic crisis that hit the United States, that hits the countries of the European Union and the entire capitalist world. The figures are frightening and they speak for themselves. Three hundred eighty thousand American

workers and unemployed, lost their homes, just in a month, because they could not pay the loans taken from the banks. In 2009, we estimate that seven hundred fifty banks and insurance companies will close in the U.S. The automotive industry, and the metal industry collapse. Towards this situation, the U.S. and the European Union have decided to allocate the amount of 3 trillion euros for the "salvation" as they say of the banks and the system. Where did the government really find those enormous amounts of money? From whom have they taken it? Why are they giving it now to the banks and car manufacturers? It is clear that many governments use the crisis to strengthen the multinationals and the capital. There are international upheavals, new international alliances are established, the rivalries between the monopolies for the new markets exacerbate the contradictions inside the capital. Everyone now agrees that because of this crisis the U.S. will be the losers in the international scene.

For the international trade union movement all that matters is: to organize the struggles for world working class and to coordinate these necessary struggles. It is and urgent need to stop the dismissals.

To unite the workers around the world, the struggles for a full and stable employment with full social security, wish salaries to meet the contemporary needs of ordinary people, with public social benefits in education, health, protection of environment and of culture. By securing the social security, salaries and employment rights for the economic migrants and refugees. With particular attention to new generations and working women. That is now the central objective of the WFTU throughout the world.

Comrades and friends.

Another key factor of the times we live in, is the intensity of war conflicts, the threats, blackmails and defamation. The last war in Caucasus, the continuing occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan by foreign troops, the occupation of Arab territories by Israel, the war in Somalia, in Lebanon, the attack by American helicopters against Syria,

the continuation of 46 years of embargo against Cuba, are unacceptable policies. The suffering of the Palestinian people continues for the last 60 years. This world is deeply antidemocratic and reactionary. The consequences of this situation are paid again and again by the labour class. The monopolies are gaining from the wars. The people are those who lose their lives and their future.

The WFTU believes we must all respect the peoples' decision for their own country. The peoples to have the right to decide themselves democratically and freely about who will govern them. This is the solution and not the wars and the threats.

The United Nations and other international Organizations have lost their meaning and their role. The world Bank, the World Trade Organisation and the International Monetary Fund constitute a group that imposes its policy on the poor and the Working Class. While in their constitutions and principles the beautiful worlds and statements are not absent, actually they help the powerful to become more powerful and they impose worse conditions of poverty on poor people. The result of these policies is obvious in the statement made by the ILO from Geneva that today in the world there are 360 million unemployed young people. The world working class and all the peoples are worried and confused by the role of the UN during the last 15 years. The changes in the international correlation of forces have led to the UN legalizing all the illegal activities of the USA. The ILO is not independent and it suffers from lack of democracy and transparency since it is dominated by the ITUC and is not capable to play its role. This year the election of ACFTU in the GB composition is a step forward but there is a lot to be changed. **We believe that the trade unions of the developing countries, the class oriented trade unions from the Third World countries, must play a more important role inside the ILO and the International Organizations**

The working class is being heavily exploited by the capitalists. Our society has not stopped being separated into two basic classes. On the basis of this evaluation, we believe that **we need trade unions with class orientation.** Trade unions that will be useful tools for the

workers. Independent from the transnational and the monopolies, that fight for social alliances with the poor peasantry, the progressive intelligentsia and the self-employed. Trade unions that will unite the workers on the basis of their class interests, a unity that will gather forces for the struggle against capital and will aim for the abolition of exploitation of men..

Sisters and brothers.

We are sure that your documents and resolutions, will constitute a solid base of growth and reinforcement of your struggles for the interest of the popular strata. We also believe, that your congress is important for the international labour and trade-union movement, not only of Asia but the entire world.

Long live AITUC!

Long live Working class of India!

Long live the International Working Class!

COMMISSIONS

Draft Report for Discussion on the Commission on Women

Prepared by Com. Amarjeet Kaur & Com. Vahida Nizam

Dear comrades from across the country and dear friends!

We are meeting here in this conference after a period of three years, at a crucial time when the phenomenon called neoliberal globalization that was so much touted to be the tool of growth and development has played its ugliest role leaving millions of workers around the globe and in India in lurch. women workers are the worst victims.

A report for the commission, in its true sense should take stock of the path that we had tread and traversed since our earlier conference. We need to debate and discuss about our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, identify our potential and impediments and decide on the means to overcome them. During the 38th session of the AITUC we had taken concrete decisions for implementation such as:

- ❖ Unionise women workers in the unorganized and agricultural sector through special efforts,
- ❖ Impart Trade union consciousness in the women workers through TU classes and workshops,
- ❖ Give leadership trainings,
- ❖ Insist and ensure women's participation in all the meetings,
- ❖ Encourage women into mainstream trade union activities etc.

Besides these organizational tasks there was emphatic decision to continue relentless interventions into the policy processes of the government, to watch out, study, analyse and intervene on the moves of the government to dilute the legislative provisions of protection for women.

The decision to constitute state level working women forums has not been implemented except in seven states such as Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. As per the decision of the congress two national level seminars on the "Challenges in the Changing Economic Scenario and the role of women" and on the "Universal Entitlement of Maternity Benefits" were held, the second one in coordination with the women's cell of AIBEA. In both the seminars prominent economists, academicians and women's activists participated. Ms. Meira Kumar, Union Minister of Women and social welfare and many state labour commissioners participated and shared our concerns in the seminar on Challenges in the changing economic scenario. The seminar on maternity benefits was addressed by the labour minister Oscar Fernandes.

The other decision to bring out an exclusive journal for women workers was promptly implemented with the first issue of the quarterly journal 'Working Women' coming out in the first quarter of 2006. Then on, the issues are brought out regularly. So far eleven issues have come out. The decision that there will not be financial assistance from the AITUC center and resources for the running of the journal would be raised through subscriptions and advertisements could not be completely met with because of lack of adequate subscription base. TN-AITUC has been helping consistently providing advertisement that helps in the printing and other expenses. Despite our incessant efforts the subscription base has not grown to the extent neither to fulfill its objective to reach as many women workers nor to provide sustenance. AIBEA, our fraternal organization has given 150 subscriptions and with difficulty we have been able to enroll only upto just 500 subscribers. Special efforts need to be taken to strengthen the subscription base. Reports of the state activities and contributions to the materials may please be sent. We

are contemplating to open a special legal column wherein queries from the readers will be answered by women professional lawyers. The objective of 'Working Women' will be reached only when we all make our contribution.

There has been regular intervention and contribution by the AIWWF in the matters of legislative amendments. The AIWWF placed before the standing committee of labour its suggestions and demands with regard to the proposed amendments to the maternity benefits act, Factories Act etc,. AIWWF made its vital contribution in the enhancement of maternity allowance. With regard to the amendment to factories act, removing the restrictive clause of night shift for women, AIWWF did not stop with registering its protest but also gave its strong suggestions that have largely been incorporated to ensure safety of women workers. Our participation in the ICDS Petition committee of the Parliament was also very effective.

Our association with fraternal trade unions, women's organizations and ILO has been good at the central level and in few states as well. Programmes on child labour in some states and rehabilitation programmes with the women victims in the tsunami hit coastal areas of Tamil Nadu with the ILO have proved very good organizationally to form women's committees and identify local level women leadership besides helping the women establish their financial security.

In the International fora also representatives of AIWWF have participated and presented papers in some and have effectively participated in the proceedings in some. Team of delegates, Com. Bullu Roy Chowdhry and Com. Sonali Biswas, Com. Lalita Joshi, led by Com. Amarjit Kaur, participated in the WFTU's International Working Women Conference held in Brussels and presented the India Status report. Com Vijayalakshmi had participated in the conference of the Womens' International Democratic Federation held in Venezuela as a representative of WFTU from India. Com Vahidha Nizam represented AITUC to the International Solidarity conference with Palestinian women held in Algiers and placed a note of solidarity and also attended in the International conference on Floor Wage for garment workers held in Dhaka.

We have also been making effective interventions through the media in expressing our condemnations and protests to the anti-worker, anti women atrocities and also do not fail to convey our message of greetings in deserving instances.

More than all in the recent years the participation of women workers in the organizational programmes have been immensely inspiring at all levels. The capital city and several other cities had witnessed a 'never before in the recent past' scene of tens of thousands of valiant women marching on the streets on the day of Sathyagraha in Dec 2007. Women have exhibited their anger and protest with their participation in all the rallies such as the BKMU rally in 2006, 'Chalo Delhi' programme of Anganwadi workers in Nov 2007, the recent massive strike of Aug 20th 2008 etc,. Not only is such a display exhibited in Delhi, almost at all levels, sector-wise, district-wise and state level programmes have the overwhelming participation of women workers.

There has been an impressive increase in the membership of Anganwadi workers around the country. Effective initiatives to organize domestic workers in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have also yielded very good results with thousands of domestic workers being enrolled into the folds of AITUC. There are efforts to organize Asha scheme workers and midday meal workers in Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. In Tamil Nadu sector-wise Working Women committees are formed in the Construction workers union and efforts are on to do the same among the beedi workers.

But after all this, what we have achieved today by way of roping in women into the committees and bringing them upto the decision making level is too regretfully very minimum. The unions must first be convinced with the undeniable fact that without organizing women workers who constitute more than 40% of the labour in this country, all our programmes and agitations will not be complete, full and successful.

To undersand the seriousness of the prevailing condition of women workers we present a picture of the status of the Indian women

workers, the deliberate denials that are constantly confronted with and the struggles that we do and further need to do. There has to be threadbare debate and meaningful discussion after which we engage into the imperative exercise of deciding our future tasks and course of action.

The shenanigans of the neo liberal economic globalisation, mass privatization and deregulation have bulldozed the domestic markets destroying the employment potential of the industries. Unemployment, under employment, casualisation of jobs, sale of state owned enterprises, mergers and acquisitions of industrial enterprises, exploitation of cheap labour, shifting of jobs in the 'race to the bottom', denial of hard won legislative entitlements including social security, health care benefits etc are the worst onslaughts against the workers. While the phenomenon of globalisation has proved to be dangerous to the whole of humanity, the capitalist system with its inherent characteristic of creating subjugation and slavery is intrinsically anti women resulting in the increasing 'feminisation of poverty'.

India has a population of more than one billion. Women make up almost half of the population. The status of any section of population in a society is intimately connected with its economic position, which itself depends on rights, roles and opportunities for participation in economic activities. Patterns of women's activities are greatly influenced by social attitudes and institutions, which stem from the social ideology concerning basic components of status

Besides, the conditionalities in the name of Structural Adjustment Programmes having brought a shift in the character of 'welfare state' into that of 'laissez-faire, subsidies for food, public distribution, health and education are drastically cut. Withdrawal of subsidies coupled with the pro rich and anti people policies has spelt disaster on the people. In all this women are the most sharply hit.

Characteristics of Women's Work

The three essential indicators of employment- status, sector and wage/ earnings- show that women are less likely than men to be in regular wage and salaried employment, particularly due to their tra-

ditional, social and familial roles. Therefore the spread of men and women across the manufacturing sector, between the formal and informal sector and within the agricultural sector varies widely.

Distribution of Productive Assets

The ability to benefit from new opportunities depends on the access to and availability of the productive assets including education, skills, property and credit to which women have no or most often less access than men.

Unpaid Household Labour

Women's work is generally taken for granted as subsistence and secondary contribution. Female contribution to household work exceeds the male contribution in almost all economies but is significantly left unassessed.

Women's Employment

The traditional village community in India consists of the cultivators, the artisans and those performing menial services. In each of these women play a distinctive and accepted role in the process of earning a livelihood for the family, putting in sometimes more, sometimes less and most often an equal amount of labour in both production and marketing of products of agriculture and handicrafts. Women have a higher share in agricultural employment.

The policies of economic globalisation have made tremendous impact on the women's employment opportunities. In spite of the apparent surge of female work force into the labour market, sectoral data reveal that women's economic activities are not yet likely to be status enhancing or empowering.

Taking into account the socio economic status of different categories of workers and making an appraisal of women's economic roles reveal that the women workers in the largest of these categories are placed below subsistence level. A vast majority of women are concentrated in the unskilled or very rarely semi skilled work in both organized and unorganized sector. In the rural areas they are landless

agricultural labourers and members of households with uneconomic holdings.

Vast sections of women workers from the plantations, mines, jute and textile industry are affected with the technological changes. In the absence of training opportunities, the women, already handicapped by illiteracy and lack of mobility cannot acquire the new skills demanded by the modern industry. This creates a gap in the earning power of men and women and is responsible for the widespread belief that female labour is less productive.

The overall employment situation for women has not evolved significantly since 2000, when the 'economic reforms' were catapulted into the service sector. Women's share of professional jobs increased by just 0.7 percent between 1996 and 1999, and 2000 and 2002. An ILO data reveals that women are markedly under represented in the managerial levels compared to their overall share of employment. The observation of the Union Ministry shows the total number of women job seekers has increased by 18% to 10.65 million in 2002 from 9.03 million in 1997. As per the government record, out of the total 29.66 million job seekers, educated women constitute 26.8% or 7.9 million in 2002, up from 5.7 million a decade ago.

Women in the Unorganized Sector

94% of the women workers are engaged in the unorganized sector of the economy, 81.4% in agriculture and the rest in non-agricultural occupations. The major problems that affect women in this sector arise from the unorganized nature of all industries in this sector. These are mostly the retail trade, jute, garment, food processing, construction industry etc. They are outside the purview of all the labour laws that seek to protect the security and working conditions. Moreover the market liberalization have brought in new global players and advanced technologies that result in the replacement of workers by machines. For instance, studies reveal that the number of women workers in the traditional industrial sectors like jute is declining acutely from 15.9% a decade back to just 2% now. More-

over, formation of labour organizations and unions are difficult in these sectors because of which exploitation is most rampant.

Rapid liberalization of the market has strangulated this sector of economy and employment as a result of unequal competition. In India, in the last ten years around 12 lakh small-scale industries have closed down. 'Flexibility' of labour ruins permanency and brings in contractualisation, casual labour, outsourcing etc enabling the employer to stay free of any commitment or responsibility to the worker.

Entry of MNCs and TNCs, while snatching away the legitimate job opportunities and killing host of traditional economic activities in the farm and food sector, have opened up new trends of highly exploitative culture of sub contracting where women are the worst victims. In India, the search for cheap labour of women is explicitly at display in the districts of Ghaziabad and Noida where women are engaged in the 'sweat shops' to stitch the buttons on the famous T-Shirts, Benetton and tying the lace in the Nike shoes, paid even below the statutory minimum wages. In Tiruppur, the most famous hosiery and garment center, the global brands have their end products made under the most exploitative working conditions engaging the women workers.

Special Economic Zones

These are modern and sophisticated zones of exploitation where 80% of the work force are women. The expansion of SEZ in clothing, textiles and light manufacturing industries in the developing countries over the recent decades has generally been based on low wage female labour, outrageously poor working conditions without any right to association or to form unions. Workers, generally young women, fear victimization by management and those who protest are sacked immediately. It is common for workers to be employed by fictitious contractors rather than directly by the company. The government has designated the zones as 'public utilities', requiring a longer period to longer period of strike notice. This is a fast emerging area requiring focussed attention of the trade unions to debate, discuss and evolve a common and effective mechanism to grapple with the situation.

Women in Agriculture

Agriculture remains the major economic activity for women. 81.4% of women workers are engaged in agriculture. In rural areas they constitute 87% of the female work force and in the urban 17.5%. The assessment of the role and problems of women in Indian agriculture depends on the nature and structure of the agricultural economy with its characteristic features of land relations, labour utilization and the role and restrictions of the credit system.

Since the Uruguay Round in 1994, Asia has lost an estimated total of 6 million jobs both in agriculture and industry. The so called agricultural reforms introduced in India suggest, (1) the removal of trade restrictions on agriculture, (2) a drastic cut of food subsidy, (3) the removal of all restrictions on the choice of what to produce and where to sell (4) unrestricted freedom of operation of agribusiness corporations and (5) abolition of land ceiling laws. These proposals are gradually introduced into the Indian agricultural sector.

Corporatisation of agriculture has led to depeasantisation and reduction of labour absorption. Change in the cropping patterns requiring skills denies the women workers their share of jobs. Introduction of herbicides and weedicides as part of commercial farm operation badly affect women's wage earnings. Tissue culture and biological technologies rob women of their employment in farm nurseries. Exposure to agro chemicals create serious health hazards like gynaecological infections, intestinal parasitic infections etc.

Unrestricted flow of foreign agro products flush out the domestic products thus killing the sector and denying employment. For instance the tea plantation workers mainly women, in the states of Kerala, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu were the worst affected with the unrestricted import of tea and a steep decline in the international tea prices. There has been unprecedented emergence of 500 joint venture companies in the food production in India posing a grave danger to the industry and the workers.

Denial of access to land ownership, credit facility from financial institutions (for want of collateral security), lack of skills in using tech-

nology and marketing are all aspects creating serious constraints for women to engage in the most exploitative wage earning occupations.

India is told not to grow food but grow shrimps (through aquaculture) and flowers for export and also to produce meat for export. These are said to offer competitive advantages for India. But every US \$ earned from meat export destroys 15 dollars worth of local food economy, and every US \$ earned from aquaculture shrimp export, destroys 5 to 10 dollars worth of local food economy. And every dollar earned from flower exports can buy only a quarter of the food that can be grown locally with the same resources. If the farmer stores and shares his seeds it is illegal in the liberalized regime. Not only farms but also seeds are owned and controlled by the corporates through patenting. The US agency Monsanto is bringing the 'terminator' seeds that would compel even the small farmer to buy seeds for his consumption crop also.

Wage Discrimination

India ratified ILO convention No 100, Equal Remuneration Convention in 1958, and ratified ILO Convention No 111, Discrimination in Employment and Occupation Convention in 1960.

There are considerable disparities in wages between men and women even for the similar work done. This is reflective of the rampant exploitation influenced by the cultural attitudes to women's work. Despite the existence of the Equal Remuneration Act 1976, the benefits of the act hardly flow to the women workers. As per the Minimum Wages Act 1949 minimum wages are to be fixed by state governments for agricultural labour and the rates are to be reviewed periodically at intervals not exceeding five years. The machinery for fixation and enforcement of these laws is not uniform. The acts are therefore not enforced or implemented effectively. The reasons for these are the casual nature of the employment and the ignorance of the laws. Compounding the problem is the fact that women are working in occupations where social security legislation does not cover them as is true of men in the same sectors.

Women in the Organized Sector

The organized sector in the Indian economy comprises of the public sector establishments and non-agricultural private sector establishments, which employ 10 or more persons. Certain laws and regulations relating to the industries, services and other occupations, govern this sector. These provide a framework of requirements, procedures and conditions, which ensure a degree of legal protection to workers in these establishments.

Out of the total work force of 400 million, only 30 million workers are in the organized sector. Women constitute only 18.4% of this work force. While the size of the sector is growing, the employment profile is declining with women making a smaller percentage of the total labour force. At the professional level women are concentrated in the teaching, nursing and health.

The impact of the liberalization policies have brought about the decline of work force in the tea plantation, public construction, coal mines etc. In the services sector also, with restricted employment opportunities for women's entry is virtually plugged. Retrenchment policies in the name of Voluntary Retirement Schemes aim at women workers.

Women constitute only 6% of the total workforce in the corporate houses and this estimate declines in larger organizations, while it stands at 18% in the medium organizations as revealed by the study of the Confederation of Indian Industries. Inherent discriminatory structures in the organization prevent women from climbing up the ladder to the managerial positions. There is a very minuscule minority of women who have succeeded upto the top levels of the higher echelons.

IT & ITES- Call Centers & BPOs

The robust growth in the Information Technology is projected to attract a whopping foreign capital of 50 billion US Dollars by the year 2008. The employment potential in this sector though cannot be undermined, has brought about a complete and dangerous change

in the work culture. The employment intensive call centers and the BPOs create isolated islands of middle class young men and women workers. Dizzied in the completely Americanised work environs, these young women and men workers are languishing in the worst occupational health hazards, besides falling unconscious victims of the mixed western work cultures. There is hardly scope here for the technically qualified workers to have a vertical growth in their career. It is a pity that this section has so far not identified itself with the working class. Exploitation of sophisticated forms is rampant and protective labour laws are anaethema here.

The current global financial crisis has explicitly displayed itself in this industry with the global giant MNCs are forced to retrench thousands of employees overnight. Altogether lakhs of young and vibrant technicians, technologists and engineers have been axed out of their jobs. Trade unions are taking all out efforts to organize and unionise these workers. We are also demanding exclusive labour laws to regulate employment and ensure job and social security.

Feminisation of Migration

Migration is not new in the human history. But migration in such large scale involving women portrays the picture of the distress of the women worker. The ILO report says that the failure of globalisation to provide jobs and economic opportunities has increased the migration trends all over the world. Migration needs to be analysed as the one within the country from rural to urban and the migration to foreign countries. Loss of traditional jobs, collapse of cottage industries, decay of village crafts, corporatisation of agriculture result in the rural workers shifting to urban areas in search of jobs. Now the additional trend is land grabbing with the support of the government by the big corporate houses to build their empires. In such instances of migration women, in the absence of the male member's economic contribution, frequently enter into the least secure, difficult and menial jobs to provide economic sustenance to the families.

Migration is the flip side of the policies of the government so actively pursued. In the recent years, more women have migrated,

selling their labour as their family's prime income earner. Women migrant workers constitute 49% of the migrant workers worldwide. The growth of migration industry comprising private recruitment agencies, overseas employment promoters, human resource suppliers and a host of other legal and illegal intermediaries has greatly facilitated female labour migration between countries. Whereas men migrate for a variety of jobs, women are disproportionately concentrated in a limited number of occupations which are frequently associated with traditional gender roles such as domestic work and 'entertainment' work. Adding to these miseries is the higher degree of vulnerability to abuse and sexual exploitation. It has been reported that trafficking of women for prostitution and forced labour is one of the fastest growing areas of the international criminal activity.

The problems leading to and faced by migration of women workers need to be addressed with special significance.

Commodification of women and Sexuality

Apart from the economic exploitation, there is also an intensified cultural and social backlash on the society in which again women are the prime targets and the ultimate victims. Consumerism, the by-product of the market economy has enamored millions of the Indian middle class that provides a fertile market to the MNCs and TNCs. In the westernized consumerism women are the 'commodities' that carry the symbols of the 'products'. They are the mere chattels that can be used and dumped. In simple terms, in the media and advertisements, women's anatomy is reduced to not more than an 'object'.

The bulging cosmetic market in India says all that is about wooing the consumers. The cosmetic industry grew to unprecedented heights from Rs 2311crores in 1991 to Rs 18950 in 2000. Thanks to the skin whitening creams! Notwithstanding all this, the portrayal of women icons in the media, both print and electronic, denigrates the dignity of women. This kind of commodification contributes to the increasing incidents of sexual abuse of women, reversing the civilized society into one of barbaric.

Not only has the cultural ethos degenerated but there is also an

underlying patriarchal fervour in promoting this sort of consumerist culture among women to keep them occupied in making themselves the objects of beauty, while the patriarchal order proceeds with its agenda of marginalizing and subjugating women.

Human Trafficking

Trafficking of persons is also widespread in India, with children and women sold for the purpose of labour, domestic service and sex trade. Some estimates suggest that out of the 2.3 million persons working in the sex industry 15% are children below 12-13 yrs. Women and children, mainly young girls are trafficked into India from the neighbouring countries such as Nepal and Bangladesh and are also trafficked within India from rural areas to main cities for the purpose of prostitution. There are even shocking reports that girl children between the ages of 1 and 2 are sold and trained for sex trade.

Poverty Among Women

India is an economy that is spectacularly watched by the entire globe. Our policy makers only project to the world the two digit growth of the economy and the fictitious growth in the GDP and the entry of more Indians in the world Billionaires club. All is not so rosy as projected. The lop sided growth has resulted in the wide gaps between the rich and the poor. Around 400 million Indians go to bed hungry, a number far exceeding that of the combined population of Canada and USA. 80% of the poor are women. Illiteracy, unemployment, marginalisation and disempowerment continue to be inflicted on women workers by the pernicious policies. All the Gender related Human Development Indices show dismally poor conditions of women. MMR in India is the second highest with 540 per 1000 live births. Close to 125000 women die from pregnancy related deaths every year. This is the making of the capitalist patriarchy that is further reinforced by the philosophy of neo economic globalisation.

Having taken a bird's eye view of the prevailing situation, we consider that our paramount task, while strengthening our base among the organized sector women, should be to unionise women workers from the unorganized sector, the most deprived with poor health,

shrinking livelihoods and muted voices. They are at a clear disadvantage in our society. In India 92% of the workforce is in the unorganized sector, one third of which are women and their dependents. The problems that they face are accentuated with policies of liberal market economy. Though the constitution of India provides for right to equality, right to life, right to social protection in explicit and implicit manner, this major section of the humanity still lies deprived even ignorant of their deprivation and exploitation.

The situation is deteriorating even further because of the relaxation of labour laws, adverse impact of the growth of technology on women workers, lack of unionization etc.,. Greater intervention in this sector, unionization and struggle for inclusive legislation ensuring adequate social security to women is the imperative need.

The Unorganised Workers Social Security Bill is a gross betrayal of the expectations and genuine requirements of nearly 40 crore workers. They have been deprived of their Human Rights of Social Security. We need to build up a big movement in order to fight for our rights. Deprivations and vulnerability are integral to the lives of women workers, particularly in the unorganized. We should fight to get what is due to us such as:

- * All women workers, paid and unpaid, should have the protective cover of law for equal wages and service conditions,
- * Need a defined, active mechanism to prevent sexual harassment,
- * Need maternity benefit with leave and all the provisions of child care as said in the Act,
- * Need widow pension and legal aid.
- * All women workers should be given social security benefits as independent workers and not as dependents or as part of family or household.

For this we should struggle. These fights are not an end in itself. They are just a part of our larger battle to establish a socio political

order of justice, liberty and equality. We have to have threadbare discussions to explore our potential and find out the impediments and remove them. Our potential is immense. We shall discuss and debate and do all that is at our might to build a strong force of women workers under the mighty banner of AITUC.

Before we conclude we make an important presentation of imparting class consciousness among our women leadership without which our struggles will remain within the narrow confines of 'women's emancipation'. Class perception tells us that is not just the emancipation of women that we fight for but it is the emancipation of the exploited working class as a whole. 'Class' is regarded as a key concept in any attempt to understand women's lives. Politicalisation is an uncompromising part of any working class struggle. The fundamental issues such as the historic underpinnings of the working class concept, the opportunities and barriers presented by the class position and then the understanding of women's emancipation as an inseparable part of the complete emancipation of the working class should be slowly taught to women. Dialogues about relations between feminism and socialism, the issues of family, sexual relations and organizational structures should be set into motion during the women workers' meetings and seminars.

The history of production under capitalism is not only the class struggle between the producer and the owner of the means of production, it is also the relationship of sexual division of labour. It is for this reason that women's subsistence activities are not considered as 'work' and as contributing to the GDP of the country. Women workers are always the worst hit in the capitalist exploitation. The preamble of any struggle for women's equality should necessarily mean the class struggle, which alone can ensure emancipation of women. Women leadership should imbibe this spirit to carry forward the mantle.

Let us look forward to free discussions

Report and Recommendations

Commission on Women

One of the commissions during the 39th session of AITUC was on the working women. Considering the fact that the women workers are the worst hit in the turbulent phenomenon of the neoliberal economic regime, the commission assumed a special significance, in the sense that the issues in focus would be to crystallize the women's agenda and activate women in the trade union activities, educate and enrich them to climb up to the leadership levels.

The commission was presided over by a presidium comprised of Com. Bulu Roy Choudhry from Kerala, Com. Jaya Das Gupta from West Bengal and Com. Hasina Gorde from Maharashtra. Com. Sonali Biswas recorded the minutes of the proceedings. About 200 women including 19 men delegates participated in the commission. 27 delegates including 5 men comrades took part in the deliberations. The reverberating rendition of 'WE LOVE OUR UNION', by the anganwadi workers setting the resolute tone for the commission. It started with the opening remarks of Com. Amarjit Kaur who said that the commission has to mainly discuss on the issues of women workers in the sharp onslaught of capitalist structure and come out with concrete programmes to activate the unionized workers, unionise the unorganized workers and to elevate the women workers to the decision making bodies of the unions.

A detailed draft report, both in English and Hindi was already with the delegates. Com. Vahida Nizam while placing the report spoke briefly on the successful running of the quarterly journal 'Working Women', but expressed concern over the 'not quite impressive' subscription base and insisted on expanding the subscription base. While

delineating the problems faced by women workers of the unorganized sector, she said the women in the organized sector also are not spared of deliberate gender discrimination. It is the patriarchal system, the yoke of capitalism that is responsible and has to be fought against as a class, she emphasized. Deprivations and vulnerability are integral to the lives of women workers, particularly in the unorganized sector. It is an irony that while the illiterate women in the agricultural sector, farm sector and the other unorganized labour have to be organized, the elite sections of the society, the highly educated young women in the IT and ITES also need to be shaken out of their deceitful slumber to realize that they are exploited and sapped of their immense strength denying their dues. Com. Vahida earnestly persuaded the women workers to discuss threadbare the problems they face in their efforts to unionise or mobilize women in trade union activities and the needs that require to be addressed collectively at the leadership level.

Com. Amarjeet Kaur, while supplementing the report, painted a comprehensive picture of the forward march of AIWWF such as, organizing two seminars, bringing out a quarterly journal, making assertive and successful participation in the parliamentary standing committees while the amendments to Maternity Benefit Act and the Factories Act were incorporated. Our participation in the ICDS petition committee of the Parliament was also very effective, she said. She extolled the women workers for participating in impressive manner in all the programmes of AITUC but in a tone of concern did not miss to point out that despite the commendable participation, their presence in the trade union bodies is too far from the required levels. Com. Amarjeet, with a sense of satisfaction admitted that the work in few states such as, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Chattisgarh etc has been quite good in organizing anganwadi, mid day meal and domestic workers, many other states are lagging far behind in gathering and generating the immense potential. She identified the new areas of our concentration to be the IT sector SEZ, private school teachers, hospital nurses etc besides the most important agricultural labour that has to be pur-

sued in coordination with BKMU. Dwelling at length on the violation of labour laws with impunity in almost all sectors she said the unions have to gear up to fight against this menacing system. She again called for a thorough discussion on these issues in focus to enable chalking out an effective future course of action.

The speakers from across the country include Subashini, Sarbani, Meenal Sethuraman, Sinha, Kamala, K. Jeevanandam, Maimoona, K. Singh, D Kamala, R.Kaur, Sushila Yadav, Pranathi Dutta, Pushpa, Sushmita, Muthulakshmi, Maheswari, Sajida, P.Ramamoorthy, Shyamali Mundal, B .D. Yadav, M Sonam, Jogmayu, Kavitha, Janaki, Muruganandam, Lakshmi, Selvamani etc.

Amarjeet Kaur made a brief intervention to give a clarification on the question of demanding women courts, wherein she said that though the women's movements have asked for exclusive women's courts, the demand is not yet concrete and comprehensive. But our demand for the enactment of Law to prevent sexual harassment in the work place has to be more coalescent and pursued sharply. B.V. Vijayalakshmi made a brief summary of the minutes of the meeting. She referred to the deliberations as more qualitative and called upon the women leadership to rise as one man to take on the emerging challenges. We should fight, she said, the struggles are not the end by themselves, they are a part of our larger battle to establish a socio political order of justice, liberty and equality. She exhorted the women workers to step out to explore and display the immense potential.

To say about the content and quality of the deliberations is to give an overwhelming note of the confident and aggressive attitude of the women displayed there. The women could, with exemplary adeptness and dexterity traverse proficiently through the nefarious designs of the capitalist system in denying the workers, the women workers in particular, their legal rights. They could with impeccable clarity speak about the exploitation, deprivation and vulnerability and discuss the necessity for strengthening the women work force. Besides the sector wise problems and demands, there ran a common

thread in unison right through, for demanding equal remuneration and a comprehensive social security net for the women workers in the unorganized and agricultural sector with maternity benefit, pension, child care centers, legal aid centers etc.

A self propelled, non partisan, honest assessment would however benumb the spirit in the fact that the commission only had the minuscule presence of men delegates making it apprehensible that the 'commission on women' was wrongly construed as 'commission of women'. May it be self reproachful, but it is imperative to make introspection.

Based on the discussions that emerged, the commission came out with the following recommendations to the congress that were broadly accepted by the plenary.

- * Unionise women workers in the unorganized and agricultural sector through special efforts. Coordinate with BKMU to organise women agricultural labour.
- * Impart Trade Union Consciousness in the women workers through TU classes
- * Give leadership trainings.

Besides these general decisions the following specific recommendations were made

The commission came to an end with the honed up understanding that the preamble of any struggle for women's equality should necessarily mean the class struggle. And therefore the women workers should organize and mobilize into trade unions equally with the men and fight against the unfair capitalist world order.

Draft Report for Commission on Unorganised Workers

(Prepared by : S.N. Thakur, Secretary, AITUC)

The requirement of industrial revolution was to organize economic activities at one targeted place and the workers were made to gather in factories or worksheds to handle machines for production. After advent of scientific technological revolution (STR) machines started handle machines. Hence change in manufacturing method. Now workers are not so much required to gather at one place to produce materials. The lean model production method is being introduced under which only some highly skilled professionals are required to be inside the factory and rest of the jobs are outsourced. Under new method of production most of the jobs are contractualised and major size of employment-casualised. The age old lifetime employment system is being replaced by time bond individual job contract. The contractorisation, piece rate, commission rate etc. reign the labour market. The employment relationship particularly present form of employer-employee relation has under gone a drastic change. It is vanishing rapidly. The philosophy of flexibility and deregulation is the new 'mantra' of today's employers.

The 'new mantra' is pushing out more and more workers from the purview of legal formal employment relationship. The workers of organized sector (formal economy) are being thrown out to roads to open repairing shops, dhabas and tea stalls, as hawkers and vendors. The organized sector is shrinking and unorganized sector is swelling up. This can be seen in statistics. The number of workers in organized sector was 3.80 crores i.e. 10 per cent in 1990 which reduced to 2.87 crores, ie. 7.05% in year 2000 and it further reduced to 2.65 crores i.e. 5.66 per cent of total workforce in 2005.

According to some non-governmental independent estimate the total number of organized workers has really come down to only 5 per cent in 2008. It means during the period of new economic policy era one and half crore i.e. 5 per cent of the workers who are enjoying fruits of decent work were excluded from the purview of organized sector. This is the speaking fact of the life

What does unorganized worker mean?

The unorganized sector does not mean full employment. The unorganized sector means the economy of hidden unemployment keeping the workers underemployed and underpaid. The corporate uses it shock observer in free market economy. The day in and the day out the army of unorganized workers is swelling up enormously. The number of unorganized workers has been swelled up from 29 crores (90%) in 1991 in 37.3 crores (92.95 p.c.) in the year 2000. As per NSSO report it has further increased to 43.30 crores i.e. 94.34 p.c. of the total work force of 45.97 crores in the year 2005. The statistics given in Tables at the end give full profile of unorganized worker. These figures also indicate the sizes of workers engaged in different segment of unorganized workforce. The figures are taken from the report placed by NCEUS to the government of India.

It is needless to say that this ever increasing trend of unorganized workers will remain continue in future. That is why the problems of unorganized workers have attracted the trade unions world over. Organizing the unorganized has become most important task today. It is most important particularly for those who believe in transformation of society as the battle field is shifting. We have to concentrate our activities among vast mass of this unorganized workers which is emerging in the world of work.

Though AITUC presence amongst unorganized sector workers is seen from its very inception, but the specific slogan to "Organise the Unorganised" was given at the Bangalore Session.

The 38th Session of AITUC held in Delhi declared the year 2006 as the year of "organizing the unorganised". Accordingly nationwide

intensive campaign among the unorganised workers was organized. The campaign culminated in the massive rally of agricultural and unorganized workers in Delhi on November 23, 2006. This campaign was organized with the active cooperation of BKMU from grassroots level to apex level. The main issue of campaign was enactment of protective comprehensive legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers. Some other important issues included payment of minimum wage, maternity to women workers, BPL cards to all poor etc. This generated great enthusiasm in the ranks and file of the unorganised workers. Prior to this and thereafter also several massive demonstrations and rallies were held in state capitals of Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Karnataka and others.

Unorganised Workers Social Security Bill 2008

We have demanded separate protective legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers for regulation of employment & service conditions with adequate allocation of fund for social security, maternity unemployment etc but what the government has proposed in the Bill 2008 passed by Rajya Sabha on October 23, 2008 has only the enabling provision for the government to formulate the schemes. Nevertheless this is first time the government has come up with statutory commitment to formulate the social security and welfare schemes for the unorganized workers.

This may be recalled that the Government first placed one Bill on 10th September 2007 in Rajya Sabha which was opposed by all Central Trade Unions. The Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Ministry of Labour for examination. The said Standing Committee chaired by Com. S. Sudharkar Reddy, MP went through the details and took evidences of all stake holders including trade unions. The Standing Committee sent in unanimous report to the Government. Com. Sudharkar Reddy as the Chairman of the Standing Committee also wrote a separate letter (August 13, 2008) to the Labour Minister Oscar Fernandes to consider the matter. The text of the letter is given below:-

Dear Sri Oscar Ji

The Standing Committee on Labour presented its report to Parliament on "The Unorganized Sector Workers Social Security Bill 2007" on 3.12.2007. The important recommendations inter-alia included the issue of Identity Cards, framing of Schemes, Funding of Schemes, Constitution of National and State Boards, Creation of Facilitation Centres, Secretariat to provide services and Penal provisions for violations, etc. The committee were appreciative of your gesture for briefing them about the Government proposal to bring an amended Bill I briefing them about the Government proposal to bring an amended Bill in the ensuing Session of the Parliament itself incorporating Committees' main recommendations.

I am sure, the Government would have studied the recommendations of the Committee carefully before finalizing the amended draft of the Bill. As the process of consultation on the Bill is still on, the Committee at its sitting held on 11th August, 2008 informally discussed some of the provisions of the Bill which are of vital importance for the success of the intended legislation and schemes therein.

I, as the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Labour, deem it appropriate to bring it to the notice of the Government the issues that were discussed and which merit accommodation in the proposed Bill.

1. All the social security schemes, which are to be introduced following the passage of the Bill should be irrevocable except for rationalization and extension of coverage. New schemes can be introduced without giving up any scheme that has already been introduced.
2. There should be a clear, self-sustaining and transparent funding procedures. It should not be difficult proposition in the light of the fact that the social security schemes which the Government of India propose to introduce will not incur regular recurring expenditure for all the beneficiaries. Only scheme on Old

Age Pension will involve recurring expenditure for which fund sourcing may be done separately.

3. The creation of a National Fund will go a long way in institutionalizing the implementation of these schemes. Therefore, provision should be made to create such a fund at the earliest. Until such a fund can be introduced, the Bill should have an explicit provision that the Central Government will ensure, directly or indirectly, that the schemes are fully funded.
4. There should be no overlapping of functions between the National and State Boards to be constituted to oversee the functioning of these schemes. These are essential to avoid the duality of control and shirking of responsibility for result oriented implementation of the schemes.
5. The Boards, which are proposed to be constituted at National and State levels, should not be Advisory in nature. Instead they may be termed as "Apex Board" to monitor and guide the functioning of the schemes and their full implementation.
6. The Act, once implemented, should be extended to all the segments and sections of the unorganized worker.
7. All the persons, whether called volunteers or workers, working for the various welfare schemes like Anganwadis, Health & Family Welfare etc, should be covered under the proposed Bill.
8. Some reasonable time frame should be there for covering all identified unorganized workers.

We feel that if these eminently feasible changes are accepted for inclusion in the proposed Bill, there is a greater chance of the Bill being passed in the Parliament with the support of all the parties.

With regards
S/d
Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy

All the Central Trade Unions agreed to the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee headed by S. Sudhakar Reddy and NCEUS chaired by Shri Arjun Sen Gupta, MP. During the meeting with the Labour Minister the trade unions stressed the following points.

- ➔ The Bill tabled in Rajya Sabha on September 10, 2007 is not accepted to the trade unions.
- ➔ The Government must ensure fund allocation at least 3 per cent of GDP for social security scheme.
- ➔ The scheme for social security should come along with the Bill. The schemes given in schedule is inadequate and already in existence.
- ➔ The cost of minimal level of universal social security, maternity and health care should be born by the Central Govt.
- ➔ The Bill must contain provision of regulating the employment, service conditions, grievance redressal, working hours etc.
- ➔ There should be a separate bill for agricultural workers.
- ➔ No distinction should be made between APL and BPL category of workers. The Bill should be applicable to all unorganized workers.
- ➔ The suggestions of Parliamentary Standing Committee must be incorporated in the Bill in toto and recommendation made by NCEUS should also be taken into consideration.

On October 23, 2008 the Union Labour Minister Oscar Fernandes placed some amendment in the Bill previously tabled in the House. While placing the amendment the Minister told the House as under:

"Madam, (Chairperson) pursuant to our commitment to providing social security to workers in the unorganised sector, we had introduced a Bill in this august House on the 10th of September, 2007. This Bill was referred to the Standing Committee for examination. The Standing Committee, subsequently, submitted its recommendations and we have been extremely benefited by the analysis and

the examination undertaken by the hon. Members of the Standing Committee. We have had a series of discussions, thereafter, with various stakeholders. It has been our endeavour to see that as many recommendations as possible are incorporated in the proposed Bill. Accordingly, I stand here to propose official amendments to the Bill that was introduced earlier. We debated at length whether the Bill should be renamed "The Unorganised Workers' Social Security Bill". We do feel that this renaming might induce informalization of workers who are presently enjoying the benefits as organised sector workers. However, in deference to the recommendations of the Standing Committee, I am proposing an amendment to rename the Bill as "The Unorganised Workers' Social Security Bill, 2008". Accordingly, at most of the places in the Bill, the term 'unorganised sector workers' has been replaced by 'unorganised worker'.

In tune with the aforementioned recommendation, we also propose an amendment to include the definition of 'unorganised worker'.

We have also accepted the recommendation of the Standing Committee with regard to making a mandatory provision for certain schemes as are indicated in Clause 3(1) of the proposed Bill. Accordingly, the term 'may' has been replaced by the term 'shall' in consonance with the recommendations of the Standing Committee. In fact, with a view to ensuring that these minimum social security measures are not excluded subsequently by the future Governments, we have excluded the term 'exclude therefrom' in sub-clause (3) of Clause 3 of the proposed Bill. This also reflects our commitment to ensure that certain minimum benefits become available to the unorganised workers.

The Standing Committee had recommended a grievance redressal mechanism. We believe that instead of having a uniform grievance redressal mechanism, we should mandate a grievance redressal mechanism in each scheme because the concept, the nature and the implementation of each scheme will be different. Hence, I am proposing an amendment to Clause 4 (2) wherein a provision is being made for incorporating a mechanism for grievances in each scheme.

The Standing Committee had recommended that the National Board should have Union Minister for Labour and Employment as the Chairperson and it should also have two representing Members from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha. Accordingly, I am proposing amendments for incorporating such changes in Clause 5 (2) of the proposed Bill. Similar changes have been made in the State Board as well in accordance with the recommendations of the Standing Committee. I am also proposing to delete the term 'Advisory' from both National and State Boards.

It is evident from the above that the Government has incorporated a number of suggestions of the Standing Committee in the proposed Bill.

Let me now come to some of the major suggestions of the Standing Committee which were indeed very valuable but, for reasons mentioned hereinafter, cannot be incorporated in the Bill.

The Standing Committee had recommended incorporation of the details of schemes in the Bill itself. The hon. Members will agree that by incorporating such details, we are taking away the flexibility which is so very essential for implementing any scheme. You will also agree that in a fast changing environment and the diversity that exists in the country, a scheme may require modification to suit the local needs or the changed set of circumstances. In such an eventuality, for every change, the Act will have to be repeatedly amended which will not be in the interest of the workers. Therefore, the details of the scheme should not be a part of the legislation.

There has been a lot of debate with regard to creation of a separate fund to administer the scheme. We believe that creation and management of separate fund will only lead to creation of a separate bureaucracy, with additional costs, without facilitating roll out of the schemes. The key issue here is whether there would be funds available on a regular basis for the schemes. In this context, I would once again like to draw your attention to the fact that once we mandate existence of schemes by the use of term "shall" in Section 3 (1), as proposed as a part of the amendments, it shall be imperative for the

respective Governments to make funds available as such schemes will not have any meaning without the funds to back them. Our reservation is not with regard to funds. Our reservation is with regard to creation of a separate fund. We also believe that funding of each scheme will vary from scheme to scheme. Some schemes will require contribution from the beneficiary, and the State Government and others may not require any contribution from the beneficiary. Even the quantum of contribution will vary from scheme to scheme. Thus, from a practical point of view, it would be best to leave this aspect until the time the scheme gets formulated. In any case, all these documents will be laid before the House and the House can always debate these issues. By enacting this legislation, we are taking away the executive domain of the Executive as regards the scheme because each scheme will be a part of the Schedule which is annexed to the legislation.

Here, I would like to thank the Chairman of the NCEUS, Shri Arjun Sengupta, who has been able to guide us a lot, and also the Chairman and the Members of the Standing Committee. The Government has already initiated a number of steps to provide social security to workers in the unorganised sector, going well beyond the recommendations given by the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS). The NCEUS, in its Report submitted to the Government, had recommended a life and disability insurance scheme in which a personal accident cover of Rs.25,000 was provided. Our Government has introduced Aam Admi Bima Yojana which provides a personal accident cover up to Rs.75,000, thrice the amount recommended by the NCEUS.

The National Commission had also recommended health insurance scheme to provide a cover of Rs.15,000. The RSBY launched by the Government provides a cover of Rs.30,000 for a family of five, twice the amount recommended by the National Commission.

I would like to inform the Members of this august House that what we have done so far is just a beginning. It will be our endeavour now to extend the benefits to certain segments of the unorganised

workers who are above poverty line as well". (From R.S. Proceedings)

Thus the Labour Minister proposed altogether 34 amendments in the different paragraphs of the previously tabled Bill ie on September 10, 2007. Many of the Hon'ble Members, particularly belonging to left parties termed the amendment as 'cosmetic' and proposed to accept the recommendations of Standing Committee in toto, but it was not accepted by the government. Then division took place. At the time of division 62 members were present in the Houses, among them 28 voted for the amendment which was opposed by 34 belonging members of treasury benches. This is the way the amended Bill proposed by the Labour Minister was passed by Rajya Saba on October 23, 2008 and the same is now likely to be placed in ensuing Winter Session of Lok Sabha

Apparently the amended Bill passed by Rajya Sabha on October 23, 2008 contains only enabling provisions to enable the governments (be it state or the central) to frame schemes of social security for unorganized workers. The Bill does not ensure any state financial commitment to allocate fund for the social security. Further, the Bill has no provisions for regulating the employment and service conditions and has no adequate grievance redressal mechanism.

The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) of UPA Government promises separate comprehensive protective legislation for agricultural workers and social security for unorganized workers. The proposed Bill lacks the promises made in NCMP. It does not fulfill the aspirations and needs of unorganized workers. The Bill needs improvement at least up to the level of Standing Committees' recommendations.

Interstate Migrant Workers

Problems of migrant is as old as our civilization. It occurs generally in distress condition of unemployment. The ongoing process of globalization is further accelerating migration from under developing to the developed region.

All over the world employers prefer migrant workers because of less payment of wages, no payment of social securities and easy to control them due to absence of trade unionism. Sometime employers use migrant workers against striking workers. Sometime contradictions are felt with local workers and the people. Xenophobia surfaced at many places. We know how workers of other states have been attacked in Maharashtra, Assam and elsewhere. Hundreds of poor migrant workers have been killed in eastern and western part of the country by terrorists and extremists.

As per report of National Commission on Rural Labour (1991) over one crore interstate migrant workers roam over one state to other. These interstate migrant are rural workers mostly SC, ST and OBCs belonging to down trodden section of our society in which women and children are large in number. They are unprotected and deprived of legal rights. The outflow of migrants is from backwards areas to developed region. In this connection the fact which is to be noted is that all most all the states are supplying as well as recipients of migrant workers. This process of migration is not going to stop. In the globalised economy a very few are winners and the mass of people are losers. The losers will not diminish. They will move somewhere. So, a gigantic task before trade unions is to organize them, to protect them and its ensure them the fundamental legal rights of livelihood.

Task Ahead

Without having a team of dedicated cadre the functioning of organizational network among the workers is not possible. Though the main source of cadre comes from amongst the workers only, but due to scattered, insecure and casual nature of employment drawing cadre from amongst the unorganised workers not generally possible at least to initiate trade union activities. Therefore to initiate and facilitate trade union activities among unorganized workers deployment of suitable cadre from out side for each targeted segment of workforce is necessary. In this connection, we have very encouraging experience in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Chhatisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra and other states where our activi-

ties have been expanded particularly in construction, loading unloading, beedi, midday meal cooks, domestic workers and many other segments where large number of cadre have come out from amongst the workers.

Unorganised worker mainly come from rural area having agricultural background. They are SC, ST, OBC and other down trodden weaker sections of our society. Overwhelming number of women are among them. Class consciousness is apparently low, but in spite of all odds our experience is this that when they become organized they fight boldly. We can also politically depend upon them. So, while planning conscious effort must be made to draw and deploy cadre from women, SC, ST and OBC. The State Centre of AITUC should fix definite target and plan strategy to achieve the same.

Targets

Unorganised workers work everywhere. There is no borderline to demark between organized and unorganized sector. Target groups may vary from state to state and place to place. Nevertheless the following segments require special attention.

1. Contract workers are worst exploited everywhere. They work under various contractors and petty contractors for various departments of state governments/central government/state PSUs/Central PSUs or otherwise in private sector. Demands would be regularisation, equal pay for equal work etc.
2. Temporary, casual, seasonal workers engaged on DMR/NMR in different departments/ministries and enterprises in private sector the demand would be regularization etc.
3. Organising agricultural workers to get employment/compensation under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 and for comprehensive central legislation.
4. Workers engaged in private nursing homes, security services, courier services, private schools teachers etc. in addition to construction, loading unloading, hawkers-vendors, Rehri-pattiwallas, garment makers, weavers, beedi rolling, tendue

leaves pluckers, domestic workers etc. including all rural and urban working men.

Common Demands

The common demands of unorganized workers are:

- Enactment of comprehensive protective legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers along with scheme for social security with guaranteed budgetary allocation of fund.
- Guarantee of payment of minimum wages. National Floor Level Wage be linked with AICPI and payment thereof be made available to all workers and for this statutory provision be made.
- Strict enforcement of labour laws and complete compliance of court orders/agreements/settlements etc. The cases of delayed payments and non-compliance must be dealt with severe punishment.

Table-I
Rate of Informalisation of Employment in million)

	1990-91	1999-00	2004-05	
Formal Workers	38.00	28.70	26.46	5.66%
Informal Workers	290.00	370.37	433.00	94.34%
Total Workers	328.00	399.07	459.46	100

Sources: NSSO

Table II
Estimated number of unorganized and organized sector workers in million

Industry group	Unorganised Sector			Organised Sector			Total		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Agriculture	243.57	9.26	252.83	5.45	0.64	6.09	249.02	9.90	258.93
Non-agriculture	71.51	70.56	142.07	22.54	33.94	56.47	94.05	104.49	198.54
Total	315.08	79.82	394.90	27.99	34.58	62.57	343.07	114.40	457.46

Table III

Estimated number of informal and formal workers in million

	Informal		Formal		Total	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Agriculture	246.56	9.51	256.07	2.47	2.86	249.02
Non-agriculture	84.06	82.46	166.54	9.99	31.99	94.05
	330.62	91.99	422.61	12.45	34.85	343.07
						114.40
						457.46

Table IV

Estimated number of non-agricultural workers in million

	Male		Female		Total
	Self-employed	Regular wage employee	Casual labour	Total	Total
Self-employed	71.05	21.02	92.07		92.07
Regular wage employee	54.16	12.55	66.72		66.72
Casual labour	33.02	6.74	39.75		39.75
Total	158.22	40.32	198.54		198.54

Table V

Estimated number and percentage distribution of unorganized non agriculture workers

	Estimated number (million)		Percentage distribution by sector (%)		Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Total
Industry	35.16	25.19	60.35	58.26	41.74
Services	36.35	45.36	81.72	44.48	55.51
Total	71.51	70.56	142.07	50.33	49.67
					100.00
					100.00

Table VI

Estimated number and percentage distribution of unorganized non agriculture workers

	Estimated number (million)		Percentage distribution (%)		Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Total
Self employed	45.68	43.53	89.21	63.88	61.69
Regular wage employee	8.01	16.76	24.77	11.20	23.75
Casual labour	17.83	10.26	28.09	24.93	14.54
Total	71.51	70.56	142.07	100.00	100.00

Source: NCEUS

Report and Recommendations

Commission on Unorganised Workers

The 39th Session of AITUC held at Trivandrum on 2-5 December 2008 appointed commission on organising the unorganised workers consisting of Com. S.N. Thakur (Convenor), Com. S.S. Thiagarajan, C.P. Singh and Prof. Bahati as member. The Commission met on 4.12.2008 at 4 p.m. and concluded at 8 p.m. As per the attendance register a total of 362 delegates participated in the proceedings of the commission. The presidium of Com. S.S. Thiagrajan, Com. Baheti and C.P. Singh conducted the proceedings. The General Secretary Com. Gurudas Das Gupta also remained in the commission meeting for 2 and half hours and guided with valuable suggestions by intervening two times during discussion.

Firstly, Com. S.N. Thakur introduced the report on problems of unorganized workers and explained the silent features of the written report. Thereafter Com. Gurudas Das Gupta made some valuable suggestion and called upon to "Unionise the Unorganized Workers" and strengthen their bargaining power for raising living standard. Then discussion started, 37 delegates from 17 states spoke on the report.

The Commission felt that due to heterogeneous and diverse nature and also vast area of unorganized workforce one single uniform model style would not work. The conditions of each segment of workforce vary from state to state and Industry to industry. Therefore, our approach should be to unionise the workers, fight for their trade union rights and realize the decent work condition.

The Commission felt that unorganized workers work everywhere and there is a division exist amongst the workers. In fact large member of unorganized workers work in the organized sector. The only the five percent of India's work force enjoy legal protection of service condition whereas vast mass of workers are deprived from the coverage of Labour legislation. Therefore there is a contradiction between organized workers and unorganized workers. The fight for unorganized workers is the fight for organized workers also. Both are complementary to each other. Some features of unorganized workers are as under:-

- The contract workers and the piece rate workers employed in private sector and also in public sector undertaking (PSUs) are worst exploited and have no protection of their services.
- They work under various contractors and petty contractors. Their common demands are regularization of services, equal pay for equal work on par with regular employees etc.
- Vast number of daily rated casual, seasonal and temporary employees work in private companies as well as in different departments/ministries/PSUs. The common demands are: regularization of services, pay scale on par with regular employees working in the same establishment etc.
- Organising rural poor, agricultural workers, Bataidar, marginal farmers and various craftsmen, self employed such as carpenter, black smith cartmen etc. and bring them under social security net is most important task.
- Organising urban poor such as small shopkeepers, hawkers, vendors reharipatteri wallas, weavers, garment makers, domestic workers, shoe makers, Leathoimen shoe-shiners, ragpickers, loaders-unloaders, workers engaged in private nursing homes, security services, couriers services, private school teachers etc. and provide them security of employment and ensuring pay-

ment of minimum wage earnings and bring them under social security net is another most important task.

- I Over three crore workers are engaged in construction industry. Over one crore workers are engaged in beedi rolling tobacco farming/processing and tendue leaves plucking. There are self-employed and home workers. Most of them are women members of SC, ST and OBCs. The unionizing and providing decent work conditions to them is most important task. It was reported that rampant violation of labour laws by employers and non-enforcement of labour laws by govt. has worsened the condition of unorganised workers.

The common demands of unorganized workers are:

- (a) Enactment of comprehensive protective legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers along with scheme for social security with guaranteed budgetary allocation of fund.
- (b) Guarantee of payment of minimum wages. National Floor Level Wage be linked with AICPI and payment thereof be made a viable to all workers and for this statutory provision be made.
- (c) Strict enforcement of labour laws and complete compliance of court orders/agreements/settlements etc. The cases of delayed payments and non-compliance must be dealt with severe punishment.

It was suggested that AITUC should form a separate cell at apex level to state and district level to coordinate and facilitate the movement of unorganized workers also fund should be created at least to imitate the trade union activities in suggestion was made, but the consensus opinion was that the AITUC Committees as a whole at different levels should make organizing the unorganized workers a foremost challenging task and take all suitable steps to facilitate and coordinate the trade union activities among them.

All the speakers narrated the horrible state of affairs prevailing in so-called unorganized sector and the unsafe condition of workplace. With connivance of government and administrative machinery the corporates has made unorganised workers the target of the worst exploitation. Several more speakers wanted to place their view point but due to constraints of time the presidium moved closure of discussion and asked them to give their points in writing to the convenor of the Commission who in turn take care of the contents expressed therein. Consequently the Commission received several suggestion which describe the deteriorated state of affairs prevailing among the unorganised workers.

The proceeding of the Commission ended with vote of thanks.

Commission on Social Security for Workers

(Prepared by D.L. Sachdev, Secretary, AITUC)

Social security is meant to provide protection to workers most vulnerable to contingencies such as illness, accident, untimely death, old age and employment. Any of these can precipitate severe downturns in living conditions of a worker and his dependents. In a rapidly globalizing world economy notions of work and the concept of a job for life are fast changing. In the changing scenario where informalisation of jobs is taking place the issue of social security assumes importance. In a restructured labour market, the terms contract work and self-employment are gaining currency. Where work is becoming flexible, there is diversity of work status, variable periods and intensity of employment with variable levels and forms of income. The labour scenario in India is characterized by a large proportion of workers engaged in non-stable activities and casual wage work. Only about 8% of the workforce is covered by various laws in India concerning social security. These laws are virtually non-existent for the vast majority of unorganized workers. Concern for this vast majority is being dealt with by a separate commission on unorganized sector workers. In this commission we will limit ourselves to social security aspects of workers covered under various statutes like Employees Provident Fund & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, Employees State Insurance Act, Payment of Gratuity Act, Maternity Benefit Act, etc.

A just society requires policies and institutions that enhance basic security. Any comprehensive policy on social security will need adequate resource mobilization. Ultimately it is the political will which

matters to implement the schemes of social security but unfortunately it has been seriously lacking.

The attack on existing social security paradigm has further deepened. Recently the Govt. of India issued a notification unilaterally curtailing some of the benefits in the Employees Pension Scheme. Lowering of exiting threshold of coverage of worker from 20 to 10 in an establishment in spite of unanimous recommendation of Central Board of Trustees has not been brought on the statute book. The Govt. is still persisting to get the PFDRRA Bill passed in the Parliament. The most damaging development in this period has been of appointment of private fund managers to manage employees provident and employees pension scheme funds. Day by day the govt. is abdicating itself of the responsibility to manage, administer and support various social security schemes.

Now we will take up the developments which have taken place in the last three years in various social security scheme.

Employees Provident Fund & Pension Scheme

As per Annual Report 2006-07 of Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), the total covered establishments under the Act as on 31.3.2007 were 471678. Out of these covered establishments, 2586 fall within exempted and rest 469089 within unexempted establishment. The total EPF accounts are about 450 lakh, out of which only about 250 lakh are active accounts. Inactive accounts means that no contribution is being received in these accounts. Contributions received in the year in unexempted account come to 14414,01 crore and exempted the amount is 5048.07 crores which totals to 19462.08 crores. Similarly in Employees Pension Fund the contribution received were 8050.66 crores. The total corpus of EPF is 158350.81 crore and of EPS it is 78741 crores. Employees Deposit Linked Insurance Fund accounts for 6780.85 crore. The grand total of these schemes comes to 243773.47 crores. These figures are being given to show why the Govt. and private corporates are eager to invest this huge corpus in the equity market. Arrears of EPF, EPS and EDLI Schemes to be recovered come to Rs.1837.67 crores.

The rate of interest posted to subscribers accounts for the year 2006-07 and 2007-08 was 8.5%. FIR/Challans and prosecution cases filed against the defaulting employers for the year 2006-07 were 649 and total number of such cases pending at the end of the year add to 6972.

Major Developments

Both EPF and Employees Pension Schemes were under major attacks by the UPA Govt., one being appointment of private fund managers in July, 2008 in spite of resistance from workers representatives in the CBT. HSBC, ICICI and Reliance have been appointed private fund managers along with SBI to manage EPF, EPS and EDLI's corpus. The last minute inclusion of Reliance surprised everyone but the background and circumstances in which it was done can easily be understood. In EPS the Gov. has recently issued notification unilaterally to curtail certain benefits provided in the EPS-95. Benefits which have been curtailed relate to stoppage of 1/3 commutation of pension and Return of Capital under Section 12 and 13 of the scheme. Earlier in June, 2008 the Govt. had amended Table B & D of the scheme reducing the withdrawal benefit for those who leave the scheme before completion of 10 years of service/contribution to EPS. The issue of curtailment of benefits was discussed in CBT EPF meeting on 11th November, 2008. The employers representatives also criticized that Govt. should not have issued the notification without discussing it in the CBT. Workers representatives demanded withdrawal of the notification. The Chairman agreed to have the notification reviewed.

On the issue of increase of rate of interest the CBT with its Chairman, Mr. Oscar Fernandes, met the Finance Minister in September, 2008 to impress upon him to raise the rate of interest on Special Deposit Scheme (SDS) to enable the CBT to recommend 9.5% interest. He was non-committal. The attempts to at least invest 5% funds in the share market were opposed by CTUOs and CBT.

The only positive development in the intervening period per-

tains to unanimous recommendation of the CBT to lower the coverage limit from 20 to 10 workers in an establishment. This will bring about 45 lakh workers more under the cover of EPF and EPS. The Govt. is considering amending the Act to implement the recommendation.

In the circumstances when the attack is increasing on social security aspects of the workers, our campaign for protection of the existing benefits and their further expansion should be further intensified. The main issues are:-

- a) Yearly increase in the pension. No increase has been given since 2003.
- b) The limit of coverage should be brought down to 10 in the first phase immediately. The same should be brought down to 5 in the coming 3-5 years and to one within a short time from thenafter.
- c) The schedule of industries and classes of establishments to which the Act applies should be removed.
- d) Contract workers should be covered under the code number of principal employer both in exempted and unexempted establishments.
- e) Splitting of minimum wage for EPF contribution should be stopped and necessary explanatory note be added in the Act itself.
- f) Special Deposit Scheme be continued and rate of interest being paid by Govt. should be increased from 8% to 9.5% as a first step.
- g) Recovery of arrears should be expedited.

Employees State Insurance Scheme

Starting with a coverage of 1,20,000 workers in 1950 the Employees State Insurance Scheme today covers about 94.70 lakh workers which when added with dependents the number comes to about 400 lakh. The scheme covers 3,31,744 factories and estab-

lishments. The total number of hospitals under the Scheme are 190 with 29468 beds. It has 1410 service dispensaries.

With passing of the Employees State Insurance Act 1948 and its implementation 1950 it has on its coverage only 94.70 workers. Besides very low coverage it is played by several maladies due to too much of bureaucratic interference, rampant corruption, shortage of medicines and equipments etc. The delay in issue of permanent identity card within three months, harassment in encashment of benefits, not recording all accidents and injuries and inefficient functioning of Medical Boards resulting in delay in estimation of final compensation are some of the issues which require consideration. Stringent rules for coverage for treatment of critical diseases is also one of the irritant for insured persons.

As reported in the 38th Session, the Corporation under provision Section 19 of the ESI Act introduced unemployment allowance for workers rendered unemployed due to closure, retrenchment or permanent invalidity arising out of non-employment injury. The main condition for becoming eligible to avail benefit under the unemployment allowance scheme is that the insured persons should have contributed under the ESI scheme for a minimum period of five years. The payment of unemployment of allowance to eligible IPs was made applicable from 1st April, 2005. The daily rate of unemployment allowance is equal to standard benefit rate to which the worker is entitled to under Rule 51 of ESI Rules.

Suggestions for improvement-

- i. Coverage should be extended to all workers/ employees working in all establishments registered under the Factories Act 1948 and Shops and Commercial Establishments Act of each State.
- ii. The informal unorganized sector be covered by this scheme or a separate subsidiary scheme be framed.
- iii. The definition of any accident arising out and in the course of employment should include the accident occurred while

on way to join duty and reaching the place of residence after duty.

Financing

- i. The Government of India must make a contribution towards financing of ESI Scheme so that the benefits can be enhanced.
- ii. In case of informal sector, it should be totally financed by employers and the Government.

Benefits

- i. Since the ESI Corporation has accumulated huge reserves to the tune of over Rs.10,000/- crores as also because of substantial rise in prices, the quantum of benefits and the periods for which these are available should be enhanced in all respects.
- ii. The ceiling on expenditure for medical care fixed by the Corporation is not realistic. Moreover a major portion is spent on infrastructure i.e . salaries of Doctors and staff, the ceiling should be raised to Rs.1000/- and at least 50 percent be earmarked for treatment and food of the beneficiaries.
- iii. The waiting period for sickness and temporary disablement benefits be abolished.
- iv. Reimbursement of amounts spent by the beneficiaries for purchasing drugs and instruments from the market should be entrusted to Medical Superintendent of ESI Hospitals for which funds should be mad available to them. All claims in this regard should be settled within 30 days.
- v. All centres in which the Scheme is implemented should have full fledged diagnostic units with all types of modern equipment e.g. ultrasound, MRI etc.
- vi. Instead of referring to government hospitals, the services of part time top specialists should be procured and utilized.

- vii. Hospitalization facilities should be extended to the families of insured persons at par with IPs.
- viii. Full wages be paid in case of employment injuries during treatment.
- ix. The ceiling on payment of sickness benefit be removed and the condition that an insured person must have 90 days attendance in six months to be eligible for sickness benefit be scrapped.

Administration

- i. ESI Corporation be made entirely autonomous and answerable only to the Parliament.
- ii. As India is a vast country, only the apex level corporation cannot administer the scheme efficiently, therefore, state level or regional subsidiary, Corporations should be established. The funds should directly flow to these State Regional Subsidiary Corporations and these should administer the Scheme in their area. Further District and Central Level committees should be formed for overseeing and supervision of the implementation of the scheme. In these committees the representatives of beneficiaries should have a predominant role.

General

- i. There should be no privatization of ESI hospitals partly or fully.
- ii. The list of referral hospitals should be exhibited in each hospital/dispensary and made available to employees and employers organizations.

Payment of Gratuity Act

Payment of Gratuity Act enacted in 1972 has undergone some minor amendments including raising of ceiling on payment of maximum amount which today stands at Rs. 3.5 lac. AITUC has been pressing for universal coverage of the Act which means that even

single worker/employee establishments, schools and other industrial units and centres should be brought under the coverage. AITUC for long has been raising the issue of coverage of school and college teachers under the Act as well as also raising the ceiling on maximum payment from Rs.3.5 lakh to Rs.10.0 lakh. Raising the payment rate of 15 days wages per year of service to one month requires further perusing.

The latest development in the matter is that Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India, has agreed to amend the Act for coverage of teachers and raising the ceiling of payment to Rs.10.0 lakhs. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour is also considering the issue of coverage of all workers under the Act. The Committee, it is reported is going to recommend that all industrial workers irrespective of the size of their units be made eligible for gratuity.

Report and Recommendations

Commission on Social Security

The Commission on Social Security for workers was constituted in the 39th National Conference of AITUC held at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala from 2-5 December 2008. A brief note on social security was circulated on the inaugural day of the conference so that the delegates can study and contribute in a better way on 4.12.2008. The Commission on Social Security met from 4 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. under the presidium consisting of the following comrades. (for more than 3 hours)

1. Com. Vazhour Somen (Kerala)
2. Com. H.S. Gambhir (Punjab)
3. Com. A.K. Bramchari (W.B.)
4. Com. T.M. Murthi (TN)

The Co-ordinator of the commission was Com. D.L. Sachdev and reporters were Com. P.S. Parmar and Com. Mohan Jha. In all 154 Comrades attended the Commission on EPF and Pension Scheme, 22 comrades participated in the discussions representing 11 states. On ESI scheme 15 comrades spoke representing 10 states and one Federation.

Both EPF and Employees Pension Schemes are under major attack by the UPA Govt., one being appointment of private Fund Managers in July 2008 in spite of resistance from workers representatives, in the CBT. HSBC, ICICI and Reliance have been appointed as private fund managers along with SBI to manage EPF, EPF and EDLI's Corpus. In EPS the Govt. has recently issued notification unilaterally

to curtail certain benefits provided in EPS. Benefits which have been curtailed relate to stoppage of 1/3 commutation of pension. Earlier in June 2008 the Govt. has amended the scheme reducing the withdrawal benefit for those who leave the scheme before completion of 10 years of contribution.

The Commission strongly feels in the circumstances when the attack is increasing on social security aspects of the workers, our campaign for protection of the existing benefits and further expansion should be intensified. The following main issues were identified:

1. The interest rate of EPF the Commission 2008-09 should be 9.5%. Yearly increase in pension. No increase has been given since 2000 in pension amount.
2. The limit of coverage should be brought down to 10 in the 1st phase with ultimate down to one.
3. Minimum pension of Rs. 1500/- pension calculation should be 1/60 instead of 1/70 on 5 year completion minimum pension should be provided.
4. Contractor workers should be covered under the code number of principal employer both in exempted and unexempted establishments.
5. Splitting of minimum wage for EPF contribution be stopped.
6. Ceiling of Rs. 6500/- should be removed.
7. Special deposit scheme be continued and rate of interest being paid by Govt. should be increased from 8% to 10% as a first step.
8. Enforcement of strict laws and implementation machinery should be strengthened.
9. AITUC Centre should organise a workshop on social security and to examine the formation of Pensioners Association.

ESI

Besides very low coverage it is played by several maladies due to too much bureaucratic interference, rampant corruption, shortage of medicines and equipment etc. The delay in issue of permanent identity card within 3 months, harassment in encashment of benefits, not recording all accidents and injuries and inefficient functioning of medical boards resulting to delay for compensation which require consideration stringent rules for converge of treatment of critical diseases is also irritant for insured persons.

Some suggestions for improvements

1. Administration of treatment and running of Hospitals and other healthcare details should be managed by corporation (s) under control of ESIC.
2. ESI membership card /account as per provident fund scheme for unorganized sector should be provided on the day of joining the establishments.
3. The establishment must submit list of employees to the Provident Fund organization and ESI organization for issuing cards.
4. More hospitals and specialist doctors should be available at all ESI hospitals. Serious diseases like heart attack etc. should be immediately attended to.
5. Employers not covering their workers and violating the law should be punished.
6. After the age of 58 some medical treatment to VRS employees be extended.

Payment of Gratuity Act

AITUC has been pressing for universal coverage of the Act which means that even single worker/employee establishment, schools and other industrial units and centre should be brought under the coverage. AITUC for long has been raising the issue of coverage of school and college teachers under the Act and also raising the ceiling on maximum payment from Rs. 3.5lakh to Rs. 10.0 lakh. Raising the

payment rate of 15 days wages per year of service to one month requires strong persuading.

The Commission on social security strongly feels that AITUC should take a lead on above issues and after discussion with other CTU's plan the agitational programme against the Govt.

The New Defined contributory Pension Scheme introduced to the Central Govt. employees who joined service after 1.1.2004 is a retrograde one. There is no provision of Family Pension in the New Pension Scheme. The Govt.is proposing to invest the Pension contribution of the employees in the share market. More than 14 state govts have also implemented the pension scheme. The commission oppose the scheme and demand for the restoration of old Pension Scheme.

Draft Report on Strengthening AITUC Organisation

(Prepared by G.L. Dhar, Secretary, AITUC)

1

The 39th Session of the All India Trade Union Congress was held at a crucial time. Prices continued to soar, outsourcing and contractualisation of perennial jobs fast increasing. Downsizing, attack on social security, blatant violation of labour laws has been intensified. The comprehensive law for unorganized & agricultural sector workers is poor shadow of what CTUs demanded. The UPA Govt. has mounted economic offensive against working class. It is threatening to implement the measures which were stalled by left parties earlier. The confrontational attitude of the Govt. is a serious challenge to the working class.

2

The prestige & stature of the AITUC has gone up considerably because of the leading role it has played in initiating the struggles in recent past & in leading them. AITUC has benefited organizationally as a result of this. The influence of the AITUC is spreading among workers. New unions are joining AITUC. While AITUC organization is now better than before, one of the principle tasks of the 39 Congress is to mould it organizationally into a powerful and fighting organization in order to meet the challenges of tough times ahead. A great deal of focus needs to be given to strengthening AITUC to make it an ever expanding union of Indian working class.

3

According to latest verification of Membership of CTUs, AITUC has nearly quadruplet its membership, raising it from 9 lakhs to about

34 lakhs and moving up from earlier rank of number 5 to number 3. Among the left TUs AITUC is on the top. This has considerably enhanced the prestige of AITUC. But in the next verification we shall have to face serious challenges from other CTUs. With little surge in membership, CTU at No. 2 can march over us. It is proposed that this Congress should give a call to double the membership of AITUC. No big mass action is possible without organising them & bringing them in the mainstream movement. We need not be deterred by the criticism that a sizable part of our membership is from agricultural and unorganized sectors. We should continue our focus on these workers, win them over and bring them into AITUC fold. This is our ideological & class duty.

4

Unorganised Sector

AITUC has focused special attention on the unorganized sector. Our focus on this sector should stay. Although more than 50% of our membership is from this sector, we are still weak in this sector and we should not be satisfied with our present strength. The scope to expand base of the AITUC in this sector is tremendous. The State Committees particularly in Hindi speaking areas must launch special campaigns in this sector and rouse these workers in defence of their rights.

5

AITUC has federations in several industries/sectors in unorganized sector like Beedi, Construction, Anganwadi, Fisheries etc. Besides, we have state centred unions in several other industries/trades in unorganized sector. There are enormous possibilities of work in sectors like Garment sector (More than 10 million) Hamal, Contract Labour etc. It is a stupendous task to organize these workers but we must accomplish it if AITUC has to play leading role in working class movement. The State Committees of AITUC must prepare a plan for expanding our base in existing organisations and consolidating them as AITUC affiliates. It is noticed that a number of our unions become

dysfunctional due to lack of day to day contact. Initiative may be taken to form new organizations in industries/trades in which there is enormous potential for growth. Workers employed in private security agencies, Railway hawkers etc. need attention.

6

While AITUC should continue its focus on organizing the unorganised workers, we have to pay equal attention to workers of organized sector. Although AITUC is third largest Central Trade Union in the country according to recent verification of membership, but there are lakhs of workers in organized sector who are outside the fold of AITUC. This calls for intensification of our work in organizing the workers in **organized sector**. Recently AITUC Centre took the initiative and revived the All India Engineering Workers Federation and made it functional. The State Committees should take initiative and form state Federations of Engineering workers where there are no such unions. Similarly many State Committees have not paid enough attention to work of organizing State Road Transport Workers in their states. Leaders of the National Federation of Indian Road Transport Workers (AITUC) can always assist in this task provided AITUC leaders contact them. Depending upon the local situation, AITUC has to strengthen work in organized sector in order to expand our membership.

7

Industrial Federations

A number of Industrial Federations in key and strategic sectors of economy are affiliated to AITUC. Some of them are weak. The functioning of some of them needs to be reviewed in order to make them struggle oriented. The tremendous significance and importance of working in these vital sectors needs no emphasis. We should expand our base in these organizations to become a powerful force. **AITUC Secretariat should regularly review the functioning of these Federations and activate them in consultation with the leadership of the Federation concerned.**

8

Affiliation Fee

The irregular or non-payment of affiliation fee by our unions continues to be a matter of serious concern. Under payment of affiliation fee is another matter of serious concern. Though there is increase in our membership, coupled with increase in the rate of affiliation fee, our income is not proportionate to our latest membership. Another serious short coming is not to pay affiliation fee till **National Conference**. Apart from gravely affecting financial health of our organization at Central and state levels, it has led to distortions where union representatives are elected to organs of the state committees without clearing affiliation fee. The State Committees must insist on realisation of full affiliation fee from unions at regular intervals & submission of Annual Return every year with a copy to AITUC centre. All unions must be made to realize that these lapses will not be condoned any further. This will strengthen Centre as well as state committees. **The state committees are called upon to make it a pre-condition for the unions to clear affiliation fee before allowing them to participate in state conferences/elections and submission of "Annual Return" to the Registrar of Trade Unions.**

9

Working Women

The number of working women is increasing fast, particularly in unorganized sector. AITUC attaches highest importance to organizing working women. AITUC has repeatedly stressed that organizing working women is a trade union task and not the duty of women's organization. As observed by Lenin: **"there can be no real mass movement without the women."**

10

The AITUC has formed an All India Working Women's Forum (AITUC) with a view to give impetus and a big push to organizing the working women. While some state committees have formed state

level Committees of the Forum, many other states have yet to do this job. The State Committees where this has not been done are urged upon to complete this task. While it would be better if working women come forward and do this work themselves, but organizing working women is not the exclusive job of working women. It is a class duty. Male comrades should therefore take initiative in organizing them and encouraging them to play leading role in organizing themselves. We should not only unionise them but consciously and on a planned basis take steps to elect them to various positions of the organization. Trade unions hardly raise issues affecting women. While it is true that most of the issues are common to both men and women but there are issues which are peculiar to women which need to be raised by us whenever we conduct campaigns. **This will draw them closer to TU movement and to AITUC. This should be treated as priority tasks.**

11

T.U. Education

As per the decision of last Congress, a good beginning has been made and T.U. education classes have successfully been organized all over the country at Regional Centres combining cadres from neighbouring states. A team of leaders/ teachers has been developed by AITUC to conduct these classes. This will help us to sensitize our cadre on ideological & class issues apart from other TU issues of topical importance. The team of teachers needs to be sufficiently strengthened so that the T.U. education can be conducted on state level/industry level basis. AITUC Centre will strengthen sufficiently this effort in order to sustain it on long term basis. **The state committees are also urged to initiate similar exercise so that they may become self sufficient in this respect.**

12

Young Blood/ Cadre

Cadre shortage is affecting adversely AITUC's expansion. Inducting young blood into AITUC is integral to its growth and strength.

The role of State Committees & Unions is very critical in identifying the young cadres. They have to organize activities attracting young blood. Fortunately India's population is quite young and if we articulate effective campaigns on issues of concern to them at work places, we could attract them to AITUC. A lot of young blood is also to be seen in the ranks of serving workers who too could be inducted into AITUC if we conduct campaign around issues of interest to them. Several serving young workers in an industry show keen interest in trade union movement. These **"sons of the soil"** should be drawn into AITUC. Young and deserving comrades already working in AITUC unions should be promoted to positions of higher responsibility.

However the main problem we are facing is of the finding finances for paying to our whole timers a reasonable wage. Since we cannot ignore cadre developing task anymore, State Committees should discuss it and find a long term solution to it.

13

Journals

AITUC is publishing 2 journals. The Trade Union Record which is the oldest T.U. Journal in the country is published twice a month—both in English and Hindi. AITUC is also publishing another journal "Working Women" which is quarterly. Several State Committees & Trade Unions affiliated to AITUC are publishing their own journals. The quality standard & format of the TUR has improved in recent past. A lot more improvement is steadily being done to make it a strong and an effective weapon in the hands of the working class. But the circulation of TUR is not increasing despite repeated requests to the State Committees & unions to increase the circulation of the TUR. Even all our unions are not subscribers of this journal. The last Congress of the AITUC in 2005 had suggested that

1. Subscription to TUR be made compulsory for all unions affiliated to AITUC. In the case of new unions seeking affiliation, subscription to TUR be made a condition while granting affilia-

tion. Unions having more than 500 members may be persuaded to purchase more copies. Where State Committees are bringing out their own journal in local language, unions in such states will have the option to subscribe to the State Committee journal. Industrial Federation-both affiliated as well as friendly- may also be requested to subscribe to TUR.

2. Each General Council member should at least enroll 3 subscribers for TUR, apart from himself.
3. AITUC Central leaders visiting states and state leaders addressing meetings of the unions in their states must make it point to stress to increase enrolment for TUR.

The above decisions are reiterated.

14

Miscellaneous issues

Size of the General Council of AITUC

With big surge in AITUC membership, the size of the General Council is becoming somewhat unwieldy. This needs to be reviewed by the AITUC and if necessary the size of the Council may be reduced by amending constitution suitably.

15

Registrar of Trade Unions

While Registration of Trade Unions with the Registrar was meant to improve functioning of the unions, ensure proper maintenance of Accounts, holding of elections at regular intervals etc, it has become a serious impediment to the Right to form an Association because in most states registration is not done for months together, sometimes for years. **It should be made legally mandatory for the Registrar to take final decision to grant/refuse Registration within 30 days of the receipt of application as recommended by First National Commission on Labour. AITUC Centre may take appropriate action.**

Recommendations:-

1. AITUC should double its membership in coming period both in unorganized sector as well as in organized sector.
2. AITUC Centre to review the functioning of industrial federations in order to strengthen them.
3. The State Committees to ensure existing affiliated unions do not become dysfunctional.
4. Payment of affiliation fee and submission of "Annual Returns" to Registrar of Trade Unions with-a copy to AITUC Centre be made a pre-condition for participation in State Conferences.
5. Steps be taken to bring women workers into AITUC fold.
6. Trade union education be further strengthened by AITUC Centre. The State Committees also to take similar steps.
7. The State Committees be called upon to locate young Blood among serving employees during campaigns and encourage them to join AITUC.
8. AITUC Centre to consider measures suggested in the report to increase circulation of TUR.
9. In order to ensure General Council does not become unwieldy in size, AITUC Centre to consider the matter.

Report and Recommendations

Commission on Strengthening AITUC Organisation

The 39th Session of AITUC constituted a Commission on Strengthening AITUC organisation. Presidium consisting of Coms. H.V. Anantha Subba Rao (Karnataka), Ranjit Guha (W.B.), B.S. Brar (Punjab), Krishna Modi (M.P.) and V.V. Rama Rao (A.P.) was constituted to conduct the proceedings of the Commission.

177 Delegates attended the meeting of the Commission. Thirtyfive delegates participated in the deliberations of the Commission. The draft report circulated earlier was introduced by Com. G.L. Dhar, Secretary, AITUC.

Com. A.B. Bardhan, Vice President, AITUC, briefly remained in the meeting and in a brief intervention he stated he was happy to note that determined efforts were being made to strengthen AITUC. He was critical of the size of the 39th Session numbering more than 2500 delegates. He advised that this number be reduced so that National Conference may become manageable and deliberations productive.

- i) The Commission recommended that the effort to be consolidated on membership in order to further improve AITUC rank as & when next round of verification may be done. The Commission welcomed the proposal to double the membership of the AITUC but recommends that it needs to be discussed in appropriate forum in AITUC in consultation with State leaders and details worked out. The Organization at Centre, State & Union levels needs to be strengthened in order to expand it further. A suggestion was made that District Level Committees

be revived where they do not exist. The AITUC Centre and State Committees may consider it.

- ii) AITUC should continue its focus on unorganized sector. Keeping in view the ever increasing number of contract labour, all options to organize them should be kept open. While recognized unions organizing them is the best option, but where necessary they could be organized as separate unions. The commission recommends that AITUC Centre should constitute a small committee under the Chairmanship of General Secretary to organize the unorganized sector workers. The Commission also recommended that home based/domestic workers organization may be formed in all states as has been done in some states.
- (iii) The Commission welcomed the stress laid by AITUC Centre and State Committees for the clearance of affiliation fee before National Conference which seems to have improved the situation. The Commission recommended that timely payment of affiliation fee and submission of Annual Regularly should be insisted upon at the time of holding State Conferences.
- (iv) There are a number of Industrial Federations affiliated to AITUC. Leadership of the Federations and AITUC should jointly review their functioning in order to activate them.
- (v) The Commission noted improvements in TUR and recommends that it should be made compulsory for all affiliated unions to subscribe to the TUR. While paying affiliation fee they should also pay subscription fee for TUR.
- (vi) While number of working women is increasing in the country, and AITUC is unionizing them but their attendance in conferences and other meetings is not quite satisfactory. Accordingly the Commission recommends that the All India Working Women's Forum of the AITUC should be strengthened both at Central level & State level in order to improve their representation.
- (vii) The Commission welcomed AITUC centers decision to revive

Trade Union Education. This effort should be continued and expanded. The Commission suggests that State Committees in consultation with AITUC Centre should also conduct T.U. Education Classes.

- (viii) Regarding cadre development, the Commission feels that in unorganized sector whole timers are necessary but because of financial constraints, engaging a whole timer is a serious problem. The Commission recommends that cadre development is a serious problem and quite important for expanding AITUC. The AITUC Centre should discuss it with State leaders and take suitable decision. In fact the Commission suggests that organizational issues should be discussed regularly in General Council and Working Committee in order to strengthen AITUC.
- (ix) The Commission also recommends that AITUC should improve and expand its liaison with the Central and State Govts. Employees in order to bring them closer to AITUC. Most crucial and important sectors are involved and it is necessary that AITUC should improve its presence in these sectors.
- (x) The Commission noted that Registration of T.U. is inordinately delayed by Registrar of TUs in number of states creating serious problem for expansion. This should be taken up with the Ministry of Labour.

Report and Recommendations of the Commission Challenges before the Working Class in the Present Economic Situation

(Presented by Christopher Fonseca, Secretary, AITUC)

The presentation, based on the Report of the GS, from page 3 to 23 was made by Com. H. Mahadevan who also added several factors and dimensions on the present economic situation. Com. Deshkar and Com. A. M. Gopu co-chaired the session.

Broadly, the following findings & suggestions emerged in the Commission that dealt with the economic situation.

- "1. To launch a massive and dedicated campaign through educative and informative hand – outs, leaflets, meetings, gate-meetings, general body meetings, panel discussions, seminars, etc. To create awareness among the mass of toiling people to effectively counter –offensive against the savage rise of 'Monopoly Capital', for social and economic advancement of the mass of toiling people and the working class.
2. AITUC shall launch relentless struggles against price-rise to ensure efficient distribution of food-grains and other essentials through the Public Distribution System (PDS). Recognizes the need for offensive struggle for advance & change.
3. **To launch dedicated struggles to ensure Minimum Wage based on the recommendations of 15th ILC and Supreme court judgments on the subject.**
4. **Launch struggles to achieve PARITY IN WAGES to Con-**

tract, Casual, Temporary, daily-wage workers and women workers on the basis of the inviolable principle of "Equal Pay for Equal Work".

5. Determinedly pursue implementation of the labour laws. Ensure that all Special Economic Zones (SEZ's) and Free Trade zones (FIZ's) implement all the labour other laws of the country,
6. To stop the disinvestment and 'Privatization' of public sector undertaking (PSU's) To launch a sustained campaign demanding the expansion and strengthening of PSU's.
7. **The AITUC ought to undertake special campaigns against job losses in the organized as well as unorganised sectors; and launch struggles for the creation of New jobs and further demand Unemployment – Allowance to those who suffer loss of jobs and /for unemployed.**
8. **The AITUC shall campaign for the implementation of composite and Comprehensive 'Social Security Schemes' for the benefit of the working-masses; Also raise struggles for the implementation of constitutional guarantees for the people such as "Free Drinking Water, Education and Health –Care". Launch struggles for the Right to housing, sanitation, ambient air and connectivity such as public transport systems for the rural & urban people.**
9. **Maintain strict vigil and fight the forces of Communalism, Parochialism, Superstition, Divisions which create antagonism among the working class and the oppressed.**
10. AITUC shall take the initiative to achieve the broadest unity in perception, strategy and action of working class mass organisations, of youth, students, women, Central Trade

unions, independent Federations to mount a collective offensive against 'monopoly Capital'. Also ensure the participation of artists, writers, intellectuals in all solidarity campaigns & struggles.

11. To achieve sustained and successful struggles launched by AITUC, there is an urgent need for ideological, political education through educational programmes using of modern educational aids wherein the office-bearers and cadres of AITUC unions refresh and update their knowledge, leadership skills.
12. That the AITUC national centre should establish a well-equipped 'Control-room' to guide, intervene and proactively co-ordinate on a 24x7' basis so that the unions at the state level are enabled & assisted to achieve the desired success in their activities."

Report of the Credentials Committee

(Presented by Com. P.K.Ganguly, Vice President, AITUC)

The Credential Committee was comprised of:

1. Com. P.K. Ganguly
2. Com. K. Srinivasa Rao
3. Com. Prof. Ram Baheti

I am happy to mention the names of few other comrades also who extended their help. These comrades are Com. Shivakumar Ganveer, Com. Karbhari Ugali (Maharashtra), Com. Md. Yusufuddin, Com. B. Tulasendra of Andhra, Com. Basudev Gupta of West Bengal and others. We are grateful to them.

An information on 13 points was collected through credential forms which were distributed to all the delegates.

- (i) We have received 2234 Credential Forms from the delegates of 24 states. Centre, Bank, LIC, GIC, Defence.
- (ii) Out of the 2234 delegates 92 are women delegates i.e. 8.55%.
- (iii) There are 4 delegates below the age of 20 years & 67 delegates above 71 years.

The details of age of remaining delegates is as under-

21 to 30	77	31 To 40	416
41 To 50	768	51 To 60	633
61 To 70	266		

Most of the delegates from the central Office bearers, Working

committee Members, State Office Bearers are attending the Conference.

- (iv) **Regarding the educational level of our delegates it was found that the percentage of illiterate comrades is very less. Only 9 delegates are illiterate. We have 235 comrades who are primary & secondary. We have 450 delegates who are matriculate or + 2. There are 172 graduate delegates amongst us and 66 are post graduates. It is found that 21 delegates are highly educated. They have the professional degrees like engineering, B.Tech. LLB, MBA, Pharmaceuticals, Social work, PHD etc.**
- (v) As far as the class composition of the delegate is concerned, we have classified the delegates into 3 categories. Working class, peasantry and middle class. **Most of the delegates belong to Working class including agricultural workers.**
- (vi) A picture of economic condition of our delegates is quite clear. We have classified all the delegates into six income groups. As per the information we have received, the delegates whose monthly income is less than Rs. 1000/-, are 270 while monthly income of the 810 delegates is upto to Rs. 5000/-, 450 delegates are drawing monthly salary upto Rs. 10,000/-, 309 delegates income is Rs. 10001 to 20000. 280 delegates income is above Rs. 20000/- per month. 166 delegates have preferred 'no' to write anything in the column of incomes.
- (vii) While fighting the battle, whether the comrades were sent to jail or not? This was asked to all the delegates Most of the comrades have taken birth after freedom & therefore the question of jail before freedom is not applicable to them. But few respected comrades are those who were in jail even before freedom.
- (viii) How many comrades during the last 3 years i.e. after Delhi

AITUC Session went to jail? This is to show that the tradition of militant agitation, militant struggle is continued or not?

It was told by many delegates that after Delhi AITUC session they were sent to jail due to their participation in militant struggle during the last 3 years.

Some delegates could not distinguish between arrest by police & jail . Many times the activists are arrested for half an hour, or a day after Rasta Roko, Rail Roko of some other agitation. That can not be called as jail. That is merely an arrest for few hours. This type of agitation & arrest is also important but this cannot be termed as going to jail.

(ix) **Most of the comrade delegates are in action. They have participated in the several struggles after independence.**

The Credential Committee did not get enough time to thoroughly analyse the information for it requires at least two days to analyse and tabulate the required information to substantiate the figures on all informations. Therefore it would be better to find out a solution to see that this process is better simplified so as to enable the Credential Committee to properly accomplish the responsibilities. We hope the incoming leadership would consider about this problem and take necessary steps in this regard for the future occasions as our fast growing organization would definitely require more scientific methods to be adopted.

Resolutions

● Mumbai Terror Attack

This 39th Session of the All India Trade Union congress held at Thiruvananthapuram from 2nd to 5th December 2008 strongly condemns the growing menace and fresh offensive of terrorism which has left Mumbai shattered and shocked rest of the country. The Congress notes with deep concern the magnitude of attack resulting in fierce gun battles lasting for more than 60 hours at several places killing nearly 200 persons and injuring many more.

The Conference salutes the brave sons of the security forces who laid down their lives in the battle against terror attack and succeeded in flushing them out. The Congress offers its sincere condolences to the bereaved families of those who were killed.

This Conference also notes with deep concern the ease with which the terrorists managed to enter Mumbai with heavy arms and ammunition without being detected by the police and other agencies etc. and feel that it was colossal failure of intelligence agencies and coast guards etc.

The Conference congratulates the people of Mumbai for their magnificent unity and for maintaining communal amity in the face of very grave situation. The Congress urges upon the people of the country to strengthen the secular forces and not allow the communal and divisive forces to exploit the situation.

The Conference further demands that in order to fight terrorism effectively there is need for a coordinated approach between India and the neighboring countries and steps be taken in that direction.

● Future Tasks

The 39th Conference of All India Trade Union Congress being held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala from 2-5 December, 2008, having deliberated upon the Report of the General Secretary, identifies the fundamentals of the main tasks that the organisation has to perform in the coming years:

- ❖ To develop broadest resistance against the onslaught of capitalist crisis, impact of recession and unbearable inflation on the livelihood of the working masses, organised and unorganised, rural and urban, and in all possible ways, taking to multiple forms at different levels, and prevent job loss, wage cut, withdrawal of benefits to the working population of the country;
- ❖ To fight for an alternative economic policy for the creation of more Jobs, improvement of living conditions of the unorganised labour, fight for massive investment in agriculture and building up of social infrastructure for eradication of poverty, illiteracy, depravation and hunger, against concentration of wealth and pauperisation of the people for equitable inclusive growth with social justice;
- ❖ To fight against mounting terrorism, increasing threat of communalism and rising menace of chauvinism and other divisive forces;
- ❖ To organise a mammoth rally in Delhi in the middle of February, 2009 protesting against the pernicious impact of the worldwide crisis of capitalism as reflected in growing attack on the jobs and the livelihood of the common people in collaboration with brotherly trade unions;
- ❖ To organise a March to Parliament of the Working Women highlighting their problems preceded by a countrywide campaign in support of the demands of equal wage, for universal maternity benefit, for congenial working conditions, against harassment at working places and for more jobs to the women of the country;

- ❖ To step up the campaign for the enactment of comprehensive legislation for the unorganised labour, including the agriculture labour;
- ❖ To mount countrywide agitation for preventing violation of labour laws, attack on trade union rights, intervention of police for curbing trade union activities, undermining bi-partism and tri-partism.
- ❖ To step up all round activities in the multiple form to expand trade unionism among the unorganised working masses, for the improvement of their living conditions and strengthening their bargaining power.
- ❖ To increase steeply the membership of AITUC, expanding the existing unions, unionising the unorganised, forming new trade unions in the unchartered areas, both organised and unorganised and for doing the same, recruiting cadres, particularly drawing younger elements, women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minorities in its fold.
- ❖ To launch a planned campaign for politicalising the trade union cadres, inculcating the ideals of a classless society, socialist social order, exposing the dynamics of capitalist exploitation for creating a large mass of committed activists capable of leading undaunted militant battle against capitalism, for the benefit of toiling masses;
- ❖ To increase the circulation of Trade Union Record, English and Hindi; and develop the journals as the real mouthpiece of the working people of the country having increased circulation and much wider readership.
- ❖ To seek to enrich the trade union movement by conducting research and survey to enable to understand the complexity of the economic reforms and its inevitable impact on the economic fundamentals of the society and living conditions of the working masses.

While performing the tasks as above, developing broadest unity, expanding trade unionism, AITUC will have a number of organisational tasks to perform to be able to face the challenge of the time by setting up effective committed collective teams at all levels, breaking new ground, involving new elements.

● Price Rise

This 39th Session of the All India Trade Union Congress held at Thiruvananthapuram from 2nd to 5th December 2008 notes with grave concern sky rocketing prices of food and other essential commodities of daily use which is causing deep distress to "Aam Admi" in the country. Nearly 77% of the people living on a meager amount of Rs.20/- per day are worst affected. The unprecedented rise in prices is due to disastrous economic policies which UPA Govt. have been followed during last 4/5 years of their rule. While corporates are being pampered and given generous concessions, no action has been taken against hoarders who are playing havoc with the people. The monetary measures taken by Government have failed to stem the price rise; instead it has only created difficulties for the middle class.

The All India Trade Union Congress and other Trade Unions have since long been demanding immediate steps be taken to revive the Public Distribution System all over the country and universalize it so as to distribute food articles & other essential commodities at fixed prices which was dismantled first by BJP led NDA Government and subsequently by UPA Govt. This Congress also demands that Forward Trading in foodgrains and essential commodities be stopped, Immediate land reforms, remunerative prices to farmers for food grains, massive investment in Agriculture/ Irrigation in order to stop economic distress in rural India.

This Session while welcoming the initiative taken by AITUC in unleashing relentless struggle against rising prices together with other Central Trade Unions against soaring prices since last one year or more, calls upon the AITUC centre to intensify the stir further in order to compel the Govt. to change their policies & revive PDS.

● Communalism, Regional Chauvinism & Terrorism

This 39th Session of the All India Trade Union Congress held at Thiruvananthapuram from 2nd to 5th December, 2008 strongly condemns fresh offensive of communalism, growing menace of terrorism and regional chauvinism in the country. More than 60 Bomb blasts killing more than 250 people have been reported in 2008. The bloodiest were Assam serial blasts killing more than 75 people. Media reports suggest that Muslim fundamentalists helped & supported by fundamentalist organizations in Pakistan & Bangladesh were involved in this heinous crime.

A vicious hate campaign based on hostility has been unleashed by Sangh Parivar against minorities in the country. False and baseless allegations are being levelled by top leaders of the Sangh Parivar against minorities in order to polarise the people on communal lines. The recent repeated terrorist blasts and communal killings in different parts of the country have completely exposed the failure of the intelligence system in the country in unearthing the Bomb blasts. What is most deplorable the Intelligence/Investigating agencies are underplaying the role of the Sangh Parivar especially in organizing the Bomb blasts in Malegaon etc. The arrest of serving Lt. Colonel having links with Sangh Parivar and Malegaon bomb blast is a serious matter.

The incidents of large scale communal violence in different parts of the country like Orissa, Karnataka etc. where pre-planned attacks on Christians were organized is a matter of grave concern, especially because these communal attacks were organized due to connivance of the State administration of two states which overlooked the dastardly attacks. In fact in almost all states ruled by BJP there has been increased in communal violence.

The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena has resorted to poisonous hate campaign against North Indians rousing regional chauvinism in the country. The Shiv Sena & Maharashtra Navnirman Sena are competing with each other in fomenting chauvinistic feelings in Maharashtra &

the State administration is quietly overlooking, taking no steps to stop this poisonous campaign. Thousands of workers have been forced to migrate & leave Mumbai.

This Session calls upon the working class of the country & other sections of the toiling masses to unite against these anti-national forces, expose their dangerous policies in order to isolate them and save integrity & unity of the country. The working class & toiling masses should uphold the banner of secularism, national unity, socialism and highlight the role of the radical progressive forces in the country in order to preserve the unity of the country.

● **Unorganised Workers' Social Security Bill, 2008**

The Unorganized Workers Social Security Bill, 2008 is renamed and amended form of the Unorganized Sector Workers Social Security Bill, 2007 tabled in Rajya Sabha on September 10, 2007 which was criticized severally by trade unions and political parties particularly left. Subsequently the Bill was referred to Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labor for examination. The Standing Committee headed by Com. S. Sudhakar Reddy examined the issue in detail and consulted all the stakeholders including trade unions. The Standing Committee presented its report to Parliament on December 3, 2007. The Chairman of the Standing Committee again wrote a letter to the Union Labour Minister on August 13, 2008 and suggested some of the main issues to be incorporated in the proposed Bill.

During discussion with the Union Labour Ministry the representatives of all the Central trade union organizations supported the recommendations made by Parliamentary Standing Committee and demanded that a fresh Bill be drafted on the basis of the Standing Committee report and also the recommendations made by National Commission of Enterprises in Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) Chaired by Arjun Sen Gupta.

But the government instead of redrafting the Bill on the line aforesaid on October 23, 2008 introduced 34 amendments in the previously tabled Bill in Rajya Sabha i.e. on 10 September 2007 with new title as "Unorganized Workers Social Security Bill 2008" which com-

pletely ignores the main recommendations of the Standing Committee. This new titled Bill is the same as old one with some cosmetic amendments which does not fulfill the needs and aspiration of the unorganized workers.

It is to be noted that the Bill contains only enabling provisions to enable the governments to frame schemes of social security. It has no financial commitment of the government to allocate fund for the social security. The Bill has no provision to regulate in the employment and service conditions of workers, nor has any grievance redressal mechanism.

The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) of UPA Govt. promises separate comprehensive protective legislation for agricultural workers, but the government has backed out to enact the same as promised in NCMP. Obviously under the pressure of industrialists and landlords the government has failed to implement its own promises made in the NCMP.

The 39th Session of AITUC condemns the dilly dallying practice of the government and demands the enactment of comprehensive protective legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers along with schemes of social security and statutory provisions for state allocation of the fund. Accordingly the government must come in the ensuing session of Parliament with redrafted and improved version of Bill on the basis of suggestions made hereinabove.

The Session calls upon the unorganized workers in particular and working class in general to intensify the struggle to achieve the comprehensive protective legislation for unorganized workers.

● **Opposing Government's decision to hike FDI to 49% from 26% in Insurance Sector**

The 39th session of the AITUC notes with concern that the UPA Government has decided to introduce Bill in the Winter session of Parliament seeking hike in FDI to 49% from 26% in the Insurance Sector by amending IRDA Act, 1999 which would allow 26% foreign equity in private insurance companies. Since opening up of the in-

dustry to private players, the MNCs are vociferously demanding the removal of cap of FDI. The Government at the Centre made attempts in the past also but in vain, as they met the strong resistance from Trade Unions and Left parties. Again the present UPA Government has decided to hike FDI limit to 49% thinking that the political atmosphere is conducive to carry on the offensive.

This Conference notes that the Govt. proposes to amend GIBNA Act, enabling four Public Sector Insurance Companies to go to Public to raise their resources to fund their capital requirements through disinvestment of their shares and this is the maiden step to privatize the profit earned by Public Sector Insurance Companies.

In the USA, facing severe 'meltdown' not only the Banks are collapsed, also AIG – American Insurance Company is in big financial turmoil. The impact of global meltdown or economic crisis is not felt that severe in Indian Insurance Sector, since the Public Sector Insurance Companies have played a major dominating role.

This session is of the strong view that the proposed increase in FDI is not in the national interests, and to allow foreign companies to control our domestic savings with lesser investments.

This conference while strongly opposing the proposed hike in FDI to 49% from 26%, fully supports the struggle of the Insurance employees who have resolved to launch Direct Action including Strike if and when the Govt. introduces the Bill on the insurance sector in Parliament and appeals to other sections of the working class also to extend support to this just cause.

● National Minimum Wage

This 39th Session of the All India Trade Union Congress held at Thiruvananthapuram from 2nd to 5th December 2008 notes with deep concern that even after more than 60 years of independence, the Central Government have failed to formulate any criteria for fixing wages. The result is that minimum wages sharply differ within the states, within the industry and from state to state & from industry to industry.

The unorganized workers who do not enjoy protection of labour laws are the worst affected particularly because they are not allowed unionization. Their wages are not indexed, rising prices erode their wages causing serious pauperization. What is worse, even the minimum wages fixed in various states are violated on massive scale by employers with impunity. No action is taken against them even when complaints are lodged. In the unorganized sector, women are employed in large numbers. Their condition is worse than their male counterparts because they are discriminated in the matter of payment of wages. They get less wages than their male counterparts.

The norms evolved by the 15th Indian Labour Conference in 1957 for fixing minimum wages have not been enforced by the Government deliberately under the pressure of employers. No action has been taken to implement the famous judgement of the Supreme Court in Raptakos Brett & Co Ltd. to the effect that minimum wages must be based on social justice and should include expenditure on account of childrens education, medical requirements, minimum recreation including festivals, ceremonies, provision for old age, marriage etc. which should be 25% of total minimum wage.

This 39th Session calls upon AITUC to take initiative to launch a sustained mass campaign throughout the country together with other Trade Unions, in order to realize progressively the minimum wages based on the norms of the 15th ILC and the Supreme Court judgement.

● Against the power policy, Electricity Act- 2003 and dismantling of the state Electricity Boards

Starting from 1996 and after enactment of the Electricity Act 2003 till now 13 States Electricity Boards i.e. Orissa, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, U.P., Rajasthan, Gujarat, Assam, M.P., Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Delhi and West Bengal have been either unbundled or have been privatized. The Govt. of India is pressurizing the left out states to unbundle the Electricity Boards at the earliest. The Central Govt. attempts threatening the State Governments through the Power Ministry to deny them funds for the accelerated power development and the Rajiv Gandhi Village Electrification Scheme.

Because of the steep resistance by the employees the pace of dismantling and privatization of the power sector is slow and they could not succeed in their attempt to turn the entire power industry from public sector to private sector. The State Electricity Boards are existing states like Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Kerala. The implementation of the Act is going to result in violent enhancement of power tariff and current charges, denial of subsidy and concession to the farmers, rural area undermined of electrification facilities not to speak of the other miseries to different segments of the society. The stand alone systems, disconnection of power supply from grid will result into total denial of power to rural India. The future status of Social Security measures like Pension, Provident Fund and other accrued conditions of service applicable to the employees are at a stake and there is no guarantee as to how their interests would be protected. The basic sector is indiscriminately subjected to outright privatization and the Governments wedded to neo liberal economic policy are bent upon enforcing the conditions of the Act with vengeance in the State of their control. The appropriate review of the controversial act figured as an item in the Common Minimum Programme also.

The Power workmen in general are genuinely agonized by the Central Govt and State Govts. including West Bengal have also conveniently towed in line with the same policy adopted by the Central Govt. It is astonishing to note that the governments have even gone forward to the extent of hailing the merits of the Act placing the people and the affected workmen in a state of embarrassment.

The power workmen in general are genuinely agonized by the Government as they have disowned the interests of the working class and the common people by acting upon the anti-people and anti-worker conditionalities of the inglorious Electricity Act of 2003.

The present scenario urgently warrants a coherent united endeavour by the whole working class of India to launch incessant and virulent struggles to repulse the inglorious Electricity Act to preserve and perpetuate the basic interests of common man and affected working class.

Therefore, the 39th National Conference of the AITUC strongly demands withdrawal of the Electricity Act, 2003 and the policy of unbundling and privatization of electricity industry as a whole which is anti-farmer and anti national power policy.

This Session resolves to appeal the entire power workmen all over the country to take up the challenge with determination for change in policy of the Government.

● In Solidarity with 2.5 lakh jute workers strike in West Bengal

39th Session of All India Trade Union Congress supports and expresses solidarity with the struggle of 2.5 lakh workers of 59 jute mills in West Bengal who are on indefinite strike w.e.f. December 1, 2008 at the call of 18 Jute Workers Federations including the AITUC affiliated Federation of Chatkal Mazdoor Union to realize their long pending demands including the unrealized part of dearness allowance, for permanency, against default in payment of PF, ESI, Gratuity.

The Jute mills, a profiting, traditional, labour intensive industry manufacturing jute products utilizing the golden fiber and is the life line of the industrial complex in the state. The mill owners however refrain from investing even a small part of their profit for the modernization of the industry in order to improve the quality of the products; violates the labour laws with immunity, avoid taxes; default in the payment of statutory dues. More than 60% of jute products are purchased by the Central Govt. However do not take any steps against the delinquent mill owners. When the production in the mills are enhanced the manpower is reduced thus ensuring fabulous profit to the mill owners. Thousands of workers are forced to work in jute industry without their names recorded in the live register.

The jute workers are forced to strike their work on account of the default of the jute barons in fulfilling their earlier agreement and assurances on above at the bipartite and or at tripartite level.

It may be recalled that about an year ago the jute workers in

WB, had to observe 63 day strike for implementation of tripartite agreement.

39th Session calls upon the workers to stand solidly beside the jute workers to make their struggle victorious.

● **Banking Industry**

The 39th National Session of the AITUC being held in Thiruvananthapuram during 2nd - 5th December notes:

- that the expansion and contribution of the public sector banks in the last four decades is a world record; deposits and advances of Rs.4665 crores and 3609 crores during 1969 have shown an impressive achievement of Rs. 24,58,367 crores and Rs.17,97,505 crores respectively and contributed to agriculture, rural development, employment generation, small & medium industries, infrastructure development, health, education poverty alleviation etc.
- that in the name of 'Banking Sector Reforms' under the policies of neo-liberal globalization, and the compulsions of the WTO and international finance capital, the Govt. of India has been perusing the policies which adversely affect the growth, strength and role of the nationalized banks, such as (i) reducing the Govts.'s share and allowing more and more private capital of Corporate /FIs/FIIs in Public Sector Banks (ii) proposed merger of Public Sector Banks and allow EDI in Banks even upto 74% (iii) reduction of bad loans NPA through write offs, interest waivers, compromise etc. instead of taking stringent actions against the defaulters (iv) outsourcing of regular and normal banking jobs (v) reducing interest on small deposits & savings and giving higher and preferential rates of interest to the corporates (vi) shrinking the controlling, monitoring and supervising role of RBI etc.
- that the entire bank employees and officers of the nationalized banks have been consistently campaigning, organizing and agitating to cancel the adverse and retrograde policies and proposals of the Government and also against the various govt.

sponsored committees such as Tarapore Committee, Raghuram Rajan Committee, Anwarul Hooda Committee.

The AITUC's National Conference congratulates and fully supports the struggle of the Bank employees against privatization, outsourcing, merger and as well as the 'Banking Reforms' proposed by the Govt. and towards strengthening and expanding public sector banks which have firmly withstood the crisis faced by the foreign and Indian private banks in the recent melt down under the reckless market economy.

This Conference also urges upon the Govt. of India to desist from continuing with the anti-public sector and anti-peoples banking reforms and expedite recovery of NPA/Bad loans without any concessions to the defaulters.

● **Economic Blockades, Sanctions & Imperialist Aggressions**

The 39th National Session of the AITUC being held in Thiruvananthapuram during 2nd to 5th December, 2008, notes-

- that the US imperialism, utilizing the servile governments outside the will of their peoples, have imposed aggressive policies of all kinds of criminal economic and commercial blockades against the people of Cuba.
- that the US imperialism, having failed in its very many attempts to impose its right wing policies in most of the Latin American countries, which have chosen their own politics and path of development, has been repeatedly interfering in the internal affairs of those countries and carry on subversive activities in Venezuela, Bolivia etc.
- that the Bush administration had chosen to name those countries which do not follow its policies such as Iran, DPR Korea and certain countries in middle east as 'Axis of Evil' and threatened to declare the so-called pre-emptive wars of aggression.
- that the imperialist governments led by USA having caused

serious havoc and destruction in Iraq and Afghanistan continue with their aggression despite overwhelming world public opinion.

- that the United Nations General Assembly had repeatedly and almost unanimously voted to end the economic and trade blockade against Cuba but the Govt. of USA and its accomplices continue to refuse the resolutions of the USA.

The AITUC's 39th National Congress, therefore, resolves-

- to condemn the policy of aggression, blackmail and threats and criminal activities having been perused by the imperialists led by USA.
- to condemn the acts of terrorism and violation of sovereignty of Cuba and other similar nations, supported by the CIA and other specialized agencies of the Govt. of USA, UK etc. to demand the immediate release of 5 Cuban citizens now imprisoned in USA only for the fact of having struggled against the terrorism and in defence of the dignity and security of their people.
- to urge upon the Govt. of USA to stop forthwith all its exercise of blockades, sanctions and threats against the nations which are not in favour of its policies of hegemony and imperialism.
- to urge upon the US and its cronies to follow the UN Resolutions and desist from violating the International call of these world bodies.

● In Support of the All India State Govt. Employees Confederation Demands

The 39th National Conference of the AITUC strongly condemns the recommendation of the 6th Pay Commission to discontinue direct recruitment to Group D posts. The Group D posts is one of the main sources of becoming a government employee for the socially, educationally and economically backward sections of the society. Hence this conference requests the State and central Government

not to do away with the Group D posts and continue direct recruitment as per the established procedure.

The 39th National Conference of the AITUC urges upon the State Governments to grant central pay scales and perks to state government employees except the retrograde recommendations, without prejudice to such states which are already granting higher pay scales than the central govt.

The 39th national conference of AITUC urges upon the central government and other state governments which have decided to implement the new contributory pension scheme to withdraw the same as it is against the interests of central and state government employees and to apply the old pension scheme to post 2004 recruits also.

● In support of anti POSCO agitation in Orissa

The 39th AITUC Conference unanimously resolves in support of the anti POSCO movement in Orissa spearheaded by the POSCO Pratirodha Sangram Samiti. It condemns the arrest of the President of Pratirodha Sangram samiti, Com. Abhay Sahoo.

The Govt. of Orissa along with Central Govt. in collusion is bent upon to handover the precious wealth of the state ie land, mine, water, and port to the multi national giant. This will cause great tragedy to the people of the state. It will snatch away the livelihood of thousands of people making them homeless.

From the days of MOU signed by and between POSCO and Govt. of Orissa, the people of 3 Panchayats in Jagatrsinghupur district are on resistance movement and foiled all the attempts of Govt. and company to capture an inch of land in the area.

The 39th Conference of AITUC while condemning the arrest of the Pratirodh Samity President, Abhay Sahoo demand for his release unconditionally and urge upon the Govt. to stop the project, canceling the MOU signed with POSCO (India) Ltd. in he greater interest of the people of Orissa.

● Ratification of ILO Conventions

The 39th National Session of the AITUC meeting in Thiruvananthapuram on the 2nd -5th December 2008 notes

- that the Govt. of India, though being a founder member of ILO and holding a non-elective seat of the Governing Body has so far ratified only four out of the 8 Core Conventions and the most important Core Conventions "Convention No. 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and Convention No. 98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining are not yet ratified by India.
- that the year 2008 is the 60th year of the Convention No. 87 having being adopted in 1948 and the other important Convention No. 98 was adopted in 1949 and the membership of ILO, pre-supposes formal acceptance of the obligation of its constitution, which proclaims the principle of Freedom of Association.
- that according to the ILO Survey on availability of Collective Bargaining to workers of different countries (ILO Report 2004) it is only 2% in India.
- that in the aftermath of the collapse of market driven finance capital dominated economic policies of globalization, liberalization and privatization, the workers face further attacks on their jobs, wages and rights besides the increase of violation of several labour laws and the formation of trade unions are resisted by the employers, thus it is all the more necessary that the Core Conventions of ILO, besides many others concerning Occupational Safety and Health etc. have to be immediately ratified and the laws are framed and enforced strictly.

The AITUC Session urges upon the Government of India to immediately ratify all Core Conventions of ILO and fix up a time- frame for ratification of the other Conventions, at the earliest possible time. AITUC also resolves to launch national and regional campaigns, sensitize all concerned and bring pressure on the .Govt. in ratifying the ILO Conventions and incorporating the provisions under various statutes.

● Against Privatisation and FDI in Defence Production

The 39th National Session of the AITUC being held at Thiruvananthapuram from 2nd to 5th December 2008 notes with deep concern about the attack on the existing Defence Industries viz 41 Ordnance Factories, 50 DRDO Labs, 8 Defence PSU's and other Defence Establishments due to the privatization policy of the Govt. The Defence Industries were set up in this country with the ultimate aim of achieving self-reliance in Defence preparedness. The Defence Industries of our country are doing yeomen service to the armed forces by developing and producing all modern and hi-tech equipments for defending the nation. However the reckless policy of privatization and permitting FDI upto 49% adopted by the government during the past few years have put the Defence Industries into deep crisis.

The private industries and MNC's are in the arms race not for achieving the national goal of self reliance, but to do arms business and earn huge profits. The CII, FICCI and Assocham are putting pressure on the Govt. to grant Raksha Udyog Ratna status to those private industries to whom licenses are given for the Defence Production, Research and Development etc. The trade unions in the Defence especially the AIDEF is on a warpath against Corpotatisation of Ordnance Factories and privatization of defence production. The AITUC is of the firm view that any attempt of the Govt. to handover Defence production and procurement to the private agencies will result in corruption and it will have far reaching implications on national security.

The AITUC opposes the policy of the Govt. to allow participation of private sector in the most sensitive and strategic sector like Defence production. It is also a matter of serious concern that the Govt. of India has entered into various strategic military agreements with the USA, the latest being the Ministry of Defence awarding Israel a Rs. 10,000 crore contract to develop and produce an "Advanced New Generation Surface to Air Missile (SAM) system". This project is

going to be a joint venture of Israel Aircraft Industries Limited and Defence DRDO of our country. It is disheartening to note that the DRDO's work share in this project is insignificant. It is also to be noted that there is a CBI enquiry in progress against Israel Aircraft Industries Limited (IAL). In view of the fact that a CBI enquiry is in progress against IAL, no contract should be awarded to this company. The AITUC urges upon the Govt. to re-consider and review its policy of privatisation of Defence related activities and to strengthen the Indian Defence Industries both in the Govt. sector and in the public sector in the interest of self-reliance and national security.

The AITUC calls upon the trade unions in Defence to intensify their struggle against the attack on Defence Industries and expand their campaigning against privatisation in the interest of national security, sovereignty and to achieve self-reliance in Defence so as to keep our armed forces fully equipped and enable to keep their morale high.

● **Plantation**

Tea garden workers employed in Tea estates in West Bengal, Assam, Tamilnadu and Kerala are facing undue hardships due to poor wage and illegal closure of Tea estates. In West Bengal fifteen Tea estates in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling remain closed for the last four years. Similarly in Kerala, many estates are also closed at pelamade. The conference urges Govt. of India and respective State Govts. to open such estates immediately.

The re-opened tea estates also face serious problems. The agreement with union to give arrears of wages. Gratuity etc. due to workmen is not paid.

The wages for tea garden workers in West Bengal and Assam is much below the wages of Tea Garden workers in South India. The present wage at West Bengal and Assam is below Rs. 70/- while in South India Tea garden workers get Rs. 118/- daily. The 39th Conference of AITUC urge upon West Bengal and Assam to take up immediate action to ensure reasonable wages to tea garden workers.

● **Withdraw the coastal Management Zone (CMZ) Draft notification and enact a comprehensive Coastal Protection Act to protect the coastal resources and coastal people**

Ministry of Environment and Forest published a draft of Coastal Zone Management (CMZ) notification to replace the existing Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification. The CRZ notification was a safeguard against the degradation of the coast and coastal resources. But the new CMZ notification could not protect the coast, coastal resources and the coastal people. More than 70 lakhs people are directly depending on fishing and related activities for their livelihood and providing rich and cheap protein of our food and for the export industry. It is important to protect the livelihood and food security in the present context of climate change. In order to protect the coastal resources and the people depending on it we need a powerful Act and a separate Ministry.

At the present CMZ draft notification will curtail the rights of the coastal people and will lead to their eviction and rapid degradation of the coast and the resources. Therefore, this 39th Session of the AITUC demand the Central Govt. to give maximum relaxation for construction of houses for the local and traditional coastal people and withdraw the CMZ draft notification.

● **Stop the Closure of Textile Sector in Pondicherry**

In Pondicherry the three Composite Textile Mills are on the verge of closure even though they are under the management of state public sector. Once it had a capacity of 15000 workers and now it come down to below 3000 in all the three mills. The production is in standstill in view of lack of financial support form Govt. The mills can be revived and employment generated provided they should be modernized with flow of capital.

This AITUC conference demands the central Govt. to give financial assistance to the extent of 500 crores of Rupees as a special measure and save the textiles of Pondicherry. The handloom work-

ers also to be saved from non availability of yarn for production of Dhotis, Sarees, Carpets, Towels and Lungis.

● **On UP Sugar Workers Demands**

The last wage agreement of the Sugar Mill workers of U.P. has expired on 30.09.2008. In various states the wage agreement is already decided but not in U.P.

State Govt. of U.P. is not serious over the issue, therefore on 17.12.2008 all the Sugar Mill workers will stage huge demonstration at Lucknow.

This 39th session of AITUC while supporting the sugar workers demonstration, demands the UP state Govt to finalise their wage revision issue at the earliest.

● **Tannery sector- State & Centre to run Reclamation Plants**

Export of Tannery products fetches revenue to the Govt. of India more than 1500 crores of rupees per year and half of that revenue is yielded from Vellore district of Tamil Nadu. During 1970s to boost exports and fetch foreign revenues modern chemicals were allowed to be used for chocking of skins and finish them within two to three days. But the wastes including the used chemicals were let out in Palar river of the district which in turn affected agricultural water and drinking water including the soil of the district, which led to imposition of 22 crores of rupees as compensation to agriculturists in that district, who suffered agriculture due to use of chemical water for their lands, which again led to closure of many factories leading to losing of jobs for more than 20 thousand personnel who were all from bottom of the society, Now only the factories which use R.O.system of reclamation of used culminated water are allowed to function. This system involves an approximate expenditure of Rs. 80000 per thousand liters, which small factories are unable to bear and are now unable to reopen. To mitigate this difficulty, this AITUC conference demand that the Central and State Governments to run the Reclamation plants of used water and to collect nominal fee from the owners of the factories.

Condolence Resolution

Condolences to National Leaders

Comrade J. Chittaranjan

The former President of AITUC and veteran CPI leader passed away on June, 13, 2008 in Trivandrum. The Indian trade union movement has lost a great fighter for working class. He was member of Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament) for many years and also a Minister in Kerala government. He was elected from Kollam Assembly constituency three times. AITUC pays most respectful homage in the memory of Comrade J. Chittaranjan.

Com. K.L. Mahendra

The former General Secretary of AITUC and President of World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) passed away on August 12, 2007 at Hyderabad. He was a veteran freedom fighter and Communist leader who took part in famous Telengana Movement. His whole life was full of struggles for the working people. He was also In Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council for several years. AITUC deeply condoles the death of Com. K.L. Mahendra.

Com. Parduman Singh

The former Vice President of AITUC and veteran Communist leader died on December 2007. He devoted his whole life to the working class. His selfless services to the working people has been widely recognized as "Father of Pension Scheme in India". AITUC pays most respectful homage to Com. Parduman Singh.

Com. R.K. Ratnakar

The former Vice President of AITUC, a veteran trade union leader and champion of the cause of beedi workers passed away on October 11, 2008 in Mumbai. Born on November 10, 1930, joined communist movement in his early age devoted his whole life to the trade union movement.

Com. P.K. Vasudevan Nair

A great Communist leader of the working people and former Chief Minister of Kerala State died in Kerala. AITUC deeply mourns his death.

Com. Awatar Singh Malhotra

The veteran CPI leader and fighter of working people died in Punjab. AITUC deeply condoles his death.

Com. Tara Reddy

A veteran freedom fighter, leader of Quit India movement and former General Secretary of National Federation of Indian Women passed away on December 30, 2005. AITUC deeply condoles her death.

Eminent Personalities

Shri K.R. Narayan, Former President of India.

Shri Y.V. Chandrachud, Hon'ble Chief Justice of India,
Field Marshal Manickshaw,

Com. Harkishan Singh Surjit, General Secretary CPI(M)

Com. Chittabrata Majumdar: General Secretary, CITU

Prof. Madhu Dandwate, Socialist leader

Shri Kanshi Ram, Great Dalit Leader

Shri K. Ramchandran, Writer.

Smt. Amrita Pritam, Doyen of Punjabi Literature

Shri Dhanushkodi Ramasamy, Tamil Writer.

Shri Sunil Dutt, Veteran Film Actor.

Shri Kamlesh Saxena, Hindi Writer.

Com. J.P. Chaube, General Secretary of All India Railwaymen Federation.

Prof. Parmanand Singh Madan, leader of college teachers

Com. Gautam Chattopadhyaya, Former Editor, Kalantar

Com. Abani Lahiri, Veteran Peasant leader of Tebhaga Movement.

Com. Prabhat Das Gupta, Editor, Kalantar, West Bengal.

Com. Y. Boro, AIYF leader killed by insurgents

Com. P. Ramchandran, Economist.

International

Com. Vo Van Kier, Former Prime Minister of Vietnam

Com. Michais Olympios, Cyprus

Com. Herbert Fischer, Germany, a great friend of India

Com. Vilma Espin Guilois, Legendry heroin of Cuban Revolution

Com. Huang Ju, Vice Premier of Peoples Republic of China

Trade Union Leaders from States

Com. S. Narayana

Founder Vice President of All India Bank Officers Association passed away on January 2, 2006 at his native place at Tirunelveli. He was 66.

Com. G. Kannabiran

The President of All India Beedi, Cigar & Tobacco Workers Federation and a veteran trade union leader of Tamilnadu died on February 25, 2006 at his native place of Gudiattam (T.N.) at the age of 96.

Com. Narayan Palekar

Fighter of Goa Liberation and famous Communist. Died on 23 July 2006. He was 80 year old. Imprisoned many year in Agada jail.

Com. Ruldu Khan

Dedicated leader of agricultural workers in Punjab.

Com. Satish Tripathi

Leader of Press Workers &, Journals. Died on 22 July 2006 in a rail accident.

Com. G.L. Reddy

A.I.T.U.C Leader of Mumbai Textile workers. Leader of Goa Liberation. Died on 25 August 2006.

Com. Adiyodi: Leader of State Govt. Employees.

Com. Atamjeet Singh

The President of J&K State Committee of AITUC died on 10 September 2006.

Com. Palle Venkatya

Lost at Agra. Took part in unorganized rally in Delhi on 23 November 2006.

Com. M. Matheesan

The President of Coimbatore Cement Workers Union breathed his last on 12 February 2007. He formed union of cement workers in 1944 . He was jailed on several occasions.

Com. Madanlal Sharma

AITUC leader of Delhi organized building workers in Delhi. He was born in the district of Gujranwala (now in Pakistan). He settled in Delhi after partition and joined communist movement.

Com. P. Bhashkaran

A veteran trade union leader died on September 10, 2007. He was General Secretary of Kerala State Committee, AITUC for three terms and President for two terms. He turned into communist movement in student life.

Com. P.R. Rao

A veteran trade unionist and beloved leader of Greaves Cotton and Allied Companies workers passed away on November 20, 2007 due to massive heart attack. He devoted his whole life for the betterment of the workers.

Com. Baba Kartar Singh

A veteran trade union leader of Punjab.

Com. Ajit Singh

He was a veteran trade union leader. He was a dedicated communist and served working people until his death.

Com. PSA Salam

Vice President of Tamilnadu State Committee of AITUC died on 30 January 2008. Born on June 7, 1934 in a village near Trivandrum. Com. Salam joined communist movement and championed the cause of beedi Workers.

Com. Madan Lal Didi

A veteran communist and trade union leader of Punjab passed away on 12 March 2008. Didi, born on March 19, 1924 was the General Secretary of Punjab Unit of AITUC for two decades.

Com. P.R. Bhatia

A veteran leader of Bank employees died on 15 March 2008 in Ambala. He was 86 years.

Com. J.P. Khare

A veteran trade union leader and a devoted communist comrade J.P. Khare passed away on 22 November 2007. He was the undisputed leader of municipal workers in Delhi. He was born July 3, 1927 at Jhansi. He was General Secretary of Delhi State Committee of AITUC.

Com. U. Bhoja Kotian

A trade union leader and President of Beedi & Tobacco workers union at Manglore (Karnataka) passed away on December 5,2007.

Com. Rameshwar Pd. Sinha

The General Secretary of All India PWD Workers Federation died on November 2007 at Samastipur in Bihar.

Com. Suraj Singh

Devoted trade union leader of Gwalior (MP). He was victimized a worker of 1951 JC Mill Strike.

Com. Baidyanath Thakur

Leader of Agricultural workers in Bihar died in March 2008 in Ambala. He was 86 years.

Com. Nihar Mukherjee: A veteran TU Leader of West Bengal.

List of Office Bearers

Elected in the 39th National Confernece

President:	: Com. Pramode Chandra Gogoi
Working President	: Com. Gaya Singh
Vice Presidents	: Com. A.B. Bardhan
	: Com. Parvati Krishnan
	: Com. S.S. Tyagarajan
	: Com. C. Divakaran
	: Com. P. S. Parmar
	: Com. Rajkumar Singh
	: Com. Krishna Modi
	: Com. M.N. Deshkar
	: Com. Ranjit Guha
	: Com. Ananthasubba Rao
	: Com. Nara Singh
	: Com. P.K. Ganguli
	: Com. R.C. Singh
	: Com. Baldev Singh
	: Com. M.L. Yadav
	: Com. Vahida Nizam
	: Com. Souribandhu Kar

Genl. Secretary	: Com. Gurudas Das Gupta
Dy.Gen.Secretary	: Com. H. Mahadevan
Secretaries	: Com. D.L. Sachdev
	: Com.G.L. Dhar
	: Com. R. Parashar
	: Com. Amarjeet Kaur
	: Com. Satya Narayan Thakur
	: Com. Saddrudin Rana
	: Com. Bant Singh Brar
	: Com. Ramendra Kumar
	: Com. V.V. Rama Rao
	: Com. Mohan Sharma
	: Com. Christopher Fonseca
	: Com. Nagendra Nath Ojha
	: Com. Kanam Rajendran
	: Com.Chandeshwari Prasad Singh
	: Com. V. Vijayalaxmi
Treasurer	: Com. N.P. Munjal

List of Working Committee Members

A.P.

1. Com. P. Chandrasekhar Rao
2. Com. T. Laxmi Narayana
3. Com. T. Narsimhan
4. Com. V. Seetaramaiah
5. Com. K. Padmakar

Assam

1. Com. Munin Mohanta

Bihar

1. Com. Chakradhar Prasad Singh
2. Com. Gaznafar Nawab

Chhatisgarh

1. Com. Harinath Singh
2. Com. Nutneshwar Khobragade

Delhi

1. Com. S.N. Sharma
2. Com. Dhiren Sharma

Goa

1. Com. R.D. Mangeshkar

Haryana

1. Vacant

Himachal

1. Com. R.L. Dogra

J&K State

1. Com. S.K. Sharma

Jharkhand

1. Com. Anirudh Prasad Singh

Karnataka

1. Com. M.D. Harigovinda
2. Com. N. Shivanna

Kerala

1. Com. C.A. Kurian
2. Com. C. Krishnan
3. Com. A.N.Rajan
4. Com. M. Sujanapriyan
5. Com. R.Radhakrishnan Nair
6. Com. P. Raju

Manipur

1. Com. Sotin Kumar

M.P.

1. Com. Roop Singh Chauhan
2. Com. Haridwar Singh

Maharastra

1. Com. S. V. Damle

Orissa

1. Com. D.K. Panda

Punjab

1. Com. Nirmal Singh Dhaliwal,
2. Com. H.S. Gambhir

Rajasthan

1. Com. D .K. Chhangani

Tamilnadu

1. Com. Subbarayan
2. Com. T .M. Murthy
3. Com. T.R.S. Mani

Uttar Pradesh

1. Com. Radhey Shyam Tiwari
2. Com. Arvind Raj Swarup

Uttarakhand

1. Com. K.R. Kashyap

West Bengal

1. Com. Debashish Dutta
2. Com. Jyoti Lahiri
3. Com. K.B. Subba

Women

1. Com. Hasina Gorde
2. Com. Jaya Das Gupta
3. Com. Minati Sahu
4. Com. P. Vijayamma
5. Com. Rita Biatizo

AITUC Centre

1. Com. C.H. Venkatachalam
2. Com. Sreekumar
3. Com Vasudev Pande
4. Com. B. Rama Rao
5. Vacant (BKMU)

List of General Council Members

Andhra Pradesh

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. P .J. Chandrasekhar Rao | 2. T. Lakshmi Narayana |
| 3. V. Krishna Rao | 4. Md. Sirajuddin |
| 5. D. Adinarayana | 6. V. Sitaramaiah |
| 7. M. Srinivas Murthy | 8. Ms. J. Lalitha (W) |
| 9. V.V.S. Murthy | 10. R. Ravindranath |
| 11. T. Narasimhan | 12. G. Obulesu |
| 13. Kirla Krishna Rao | 14. Md. Yousuf |
| 15. B. Tulasendra | 16. K. Padmakar |
| 17. S. Balaraj | 18. V. Ratnakara Rao |
| 19. S.V. Sastry | 20. N. Karuna Kumari (W) |
| 21. M.S.N. Malliswari (W) | 22. B.S.R. Mohan Reddy |
| 23. Y. Gattaiah | 24. M. Rangaiah |
| 25. K. Veerabhadraiah | 26. N.A. Khan |
| 27. B.Ch. Mesen | 28. S. Sarala Devi (W) |
| 29. V. Krishnam Raju | 30. M. Ananda Rao |
| 31. Vacant (E. Godawari) | 32. Vacant (W. Godawari) |
| 33. Ch. V. Rama Rao | 34. K. Durga Rao (W) |
| 35. Ch. Chinna Anjaneyulu | 36. N. Raja Reddy |
| 37. B. Ramaiah | 38. C. Jaffer |

39. N. Manohar Manikyam
41. N. Ramaiah
43. Potu Prasad
45. T. Rajender Kumar

Assam

1. Upen Talukdar
3. Pranab Chetia (Sibsagar)
5. Munin Mahanta
2. Ramen Das
4. Khitish Sarkar
6. Chakleshwar Kalita

Bihar

1. Chakdradhar Pd. Singh
3. Kapildev Yadav
5. Narayan Purvey
7. Subhashini Sharma (W)
9. Vimal Chandra Jha
11. D.P. Yadav
2. Gaznaffar Nawab
4. T.P.Verma
6. Ajay Kumar
8. Shatrughan Pd. Singh
10. Daud Ali
12. Rajeshwar Pd. Sinha

Chhatisgarh

1. Harinath Singh
3. Ling Raj Nayak
5. Deepesh Mishra
7. Vacant
2. Nutneshwar Khobragarhe
4. Manoj Pande
6. Vacant
8. Vacant

Delhi

1. S.N. Sharma
3. Promode Kumar Rajput
5. Ram Raj
7. Sita Ram Mishra,
2. Dhirender Sharma
4. R.S. Rana
6. M.P. Singh
8. Hirnrnat Changwal

9. Nain Singh
11. Raja Ram Tiagi
10. I.M. Uniyal
12. Narender Singh

Goa

1. Adv. R.D. Naik Mangeshkar
3. Prasanna Utagi
5. Anisha Naik (W)
7. Rajender Verenkar
2. A.F.J. Mascarenhas
4. Gajanan Naik
6. Nita N. Shirodkar (W)

Gujarat

1. Vijay Shenmare
3. G.S. Pillai
5. O.K. Parmar
2. Ashok Kahar
4. S.J. Prasad
6. Pushpaben Sharma (W)

Himachal Pradesh

1. R.L. Dogra
3. Karnail Singh
5. Lekh Ram Vernla
2. Jagdish Bhardwaj
4. Devki Nand
6. Tilak Raj Bhardwaj

Haryana - 5

To be kept vacant

Jharkhand

1. Lakhan Lal Mahto
3. Vindhiachal Bedia
5. Ashok Yadav
7. B.N. Singh
9. Lam Yonko
11. Ram Chander Ram
13. D.P. Singh
2. K.K. Karan
4. Baleshwar Mahato
6. Anirudh Pd. Singh
8. Rajender Yadav
10. Namita Gorai
12. Baikunth Nandan Singh

J&K

1. S.K. Sharma
2. Maimoona Nazki (W)
3. Mohammad Ayub

Karnataka

1. M.C. Narasimhan
2. M.D. Hargovinda
3. M.K. Ramchandruppa
4. N. Shivanna
5. H.R. Sheshadri
6. Gunashekharan
7. B.K. Krishnappa
8. H.A. Adimurthy
9. S. Balan
10. V.S. Berinja
11. O. Puttalakshmi (W)

Kerala

1. C.A. Kurian
2. C. Krishnan
3. E.A. Kumaran
4. Kuttianikadu Madhu
5. K.M.Kuttikrishnan
6. P. Subramanyam
7. Vazhoor Soman
8. Bulu Roy Chaudhry (W)
9. K.C. Jayapalan
10. P.Raju
11. A.N. Rajan
12. T.J. Anjalose
13. J. Sujanapriyan
14. K.P.Sankardas
15. V.B. Binu
16. H. Rajeevan
17. G. Soman
18. S. Karunakararup
19. K.S. Indusekhran Nair
20. M.V. Vidhyadharan
21. O.P.A. Salam
22. P .Muthu Pandi
23. K.K. Ashraf
24. P .K. Murthy
25. Santosh Kumar
26. K.V. Krishnan
27. M.Radhakrishnan Nair
28. A. Fazludeen Hak
29. K.Bhargavan
30. C.Chandrababu

31. M.Sukumaranpillai
32. M. Y. Quseph
33. K.B. Haneefa
34. A.Sivadas
35. M.M.George
36. M.Sathyanasan
37. U.S.Sasi
38. P. K. Puspangathan
39. Vijayan Kunissery
40. K.E. Hanifa
41. T.N. Ramesan
42. K. Vijayan Pillai

Maharashtra

1. S.V. Damle
2. Babli Rawat
3. Kasbhari Shankar Ugale
4. Ram Baheti
5. Jagdish H. Patil
6. A.D. Golandaz
7. Budhinath Baral
8. Shraavan Shinde
9. Shivkumar Ganvir
10. Dalip Utane
11. P.B. Ukey
12. Bal Aloni
13. Namdev Chavan
14. Mohan Jha
15. Tanaji A. Thombre
16. M.B. Roham

M.P.

1. Mahender Bajpai
2. Roop Singh Chauhan
3. Haridwar Singh
4. Mohan Nimje
5. Ajit Kumar Jain
6. Markandey Singh
7. Ashok Dube
8. Brish Bhan
9. Sapan Chakarvarti

Manipur

1. Satin Kumar

Meghalaya

1. Vacant

Orissa

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. D.K. Panda | 2. N. Narayan Reddy |
| 3. Prabhat Mishra | 4. Anit Chakravorty |
| 5. Debashish Ghosh | 6. Ram Sankar |
| 7. Mitrabhanu Podh | 8. Bhagwan Panda |
| 9. Vacant (W) | 10. Vijaya Jena |

Punjab

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Nirmal Singh Dhaliwal | 2. Harbhajan Singh Gambhir |
| 3. Amarjit Asal | 4. Gurmail Singh |
| 5. Radhey Shyam | 6. Amrik Singh Masitan |
| 7. Karamchand Bhardwaj | 8. Rajkumar Tiwari, |
| 9. Om Prakash Mehta | 10. Gulzar Singh Gauria |
| 11. Amar Singh Bhattian | 12. Pritam Singh |
| 13. Sukhdev Sharma, | |

Pondicherry

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. V.S. Abhishegam | 2. Dinesh Ponniah |
|--------------------|-------------------|

Rajasthan

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. D.K. Chhangani | 2. Premji |
| 3. Kunal Rawat | 4. Hargovind Sharma |
| 5. Birdu Ram Saini | 6. Abdul Wahab Ansari |
| 7. Vacant (Electricity) | |

Tamilnadu

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A.M. Gopu | 2. K. Subbarayan |
| 3. P.S. Soundaba Pandian | 4. R.A. Govindarajan |
| 5. M. Arumugham | 6. Meenal Sethuraman (W) |

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 7. Kasi Viswanathan | 8. Chandra Kumar |
| 9. M. Selvarasu | 10. T.M. Murthi |
| 11. T.R.S. Mani | 12. K.Ravi |
| 13. J. Lakshmanan | 14. R. Mutharasan |
| 15. N.Thirunavukkarasu | 16. V. K. Balakrishnan |
| 17. N. Balakrishnan | 18. S. Kuppan |
| 19. N. Periyasamy | 20. G. Venkataraman |
| 21. V. Ramachandran | 22. M. Sekhar |
| 23. Packiya Lakshmi (W) | |

Tripura

1. Vacant

Uttar Pradesh

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Radhey Shyam Tiwari | 2. Arvind Raj Swarup |
| 3. Balwant Singh | 4. Ashok Goyal |
| 5. Lalan Rai | 6. Satyanarayan Tripathi |
| 7. Ajay Kumar | 8. Mahendra Rai, |

Uttaranchal

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. D.K. Saxena | 2. K. R. Kashyap, |
|----------------|-------------------|

West Bengal

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Debashish Dutta | 2. Jyoti Lahiri |
| 3. Vacant | 4. Himangshu Das |
| 5. Basudeb Gupta | 6. K.D. Ghosh |
| 7. K.B. Subba | 8. Kumaresh Chandra Kundu |
| 9. Sukul Ram | 10. Deepak Chakraborty |
| 11. Harishankar Bose | 12. Ujjwal Chowdhury |

39th Session of AITUC

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|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 13. Ajay Kannakar | 14. O.P.R. Nair |
| 15. Paltu Das Gupta | 16. Biplab Bhatta |
| 17. Shaktirnan Ghosh | 18. Ajit Bakshi |
| 19. Vidyasagar Singh | 20. Kallol Kanti Sarkar |
| 21. Pradip Moitra | 22. Niranjan Ghara |
| 23. Sudhir Mahto | 24. P.R. Pal |
| 25. Ashish Bhaumik | 26. Malay Das |
| 27. Manash Shorn | 28. Alope Brahmachari |
| 29. Swaraj Chakraborty | 30. Keshab Bannerjee |
| 31. Chiranjiv Chandra | 32. Vacant (Durgapur) |
| 33. Parvat Roy | 34. Rabindra Prasad |
| 35. Vacant (Textile) | 36. Ranjan Das Gupta |

AITUC Centre

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Promode Gogoi | 2. Gaya Singh |
| 3. A.B.Bardhan | 4. Parvathi Krishnan (W) |
| 5. S.S. Thiagrajan | 6. C. Diwakaran |
| 7. P.S. Parmar | 8. Raj Kumar Singh |
| 9. Krishna Modi | 10. M.M. Deshkar |
| 11. Ranjit Guha | 12. Anantha Subba Rao |
| 13. Nara Singh | 14. P.K. Ganguly |
| 15. R.C. Singh | 16. Baldev Singh |
| 17. M.L. Yadav | 18. Wahida Nizam (W) |
| 19. Souribandhu Kar | 20. Gurudas Das Gupta |
| 21. H.Mahadevan | 22. D.L. Sachdev |

39th Session of AITUC

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 23. G.L. Dhar | 24. R. Parashar |
| 25. Amarjeet Kaur (W) | 26. S.N. Thakur |
| 27. Sadruddin Rana | 28. B.S. Brar |
| 29. Ramendra Kumar | 30. V.V. Rama Rao |
| 31. Mohan Sharma | 32. Christopher Fonseca |
| 33. Nagendra Ojha | 34. K. Rajendran |
| 35. Chandeshwari Pd. Singh | 36. B. V. Vijayalakshmi (W) |
| 37. N.P. Munjal | 38. C.H. Venkatachalam |
| 39. C. Srikumar | 40. Rajen Nagar |
| 41. M.S. Upadhaya | 42. A.V.Nachane |
| 43. Suresh Gaur | 44. Mohan Lal Verma |
| 45. C.M. Singh | 46. Ravinderjit Kaur (W) |
| 47. Saroj Rani (W-Anganwadi) | 48. Kaushal Bhaura (W-BKMU) |
| 49. Hasina Gorde (W) | 50. Jaya Das Gupta, (W) |
| 51. Rajni Kante (W) | 52. Rita Biatizo (W) |
| 53. Minati Sahu (W) | 54. P. Vijayamma, (W) |
| 55. Sonali Biswas(W) | 56. Ram Karan (W) |
| 57. Kavita Vyas, (W) | 58. Pranati Dutta (W) |
| 59. P. Padmavati (W) | 60. Leena Chatterjee (W) |

39TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

List of National & International Fraternal Delegates

Details of the International Delegates

- ❖ Com. George Mavrikos - Secretary General, WFTU, Greece.
- ❖ Com. Archondia Anastasaki (Interpreter, WFTU), PAME, Greece.
- ❖ Com. Bashar Hamadalla Khamis Bashar, 1st Vice President, SWTUC, Sudan
- ❖ Com. Nguyen Hoa Binh, Sr. Vice President, VGCL, Vietnam
- ❖ Com. Chau Nhat Binh, Dy. Director, Int. Dept., VGCL, Vietnam
- ❖ Com Igor Urruti Koetxea Bilbao, Head, Int. Dept. LAB Country (Spain), WFTU Europe Regional Office
- ❖ Com Charalambos Iraklides, Secretary, PEO, Nicosia, PEO, Cyprus.
- ❖ Com. P.K. Khanel, General Secretary & (4 leaders including a woman leader) CONEP, Nepal.
- ❖ Com. John Sutton, General Secretary CFMEU & President TUI (Construction), Australia
- ❖ Com. Arumugam Ramiah, Dy. President CFTU, & G.S., Ceylon Plantation (Red Flag) Workers Union, Srilanka.
- ❖ Com. Pattiyage Syril, General Secretary, Podu Sewaka Sangamaya, (PSS) Srilanka.
- ❖ Com. Ahmad Husen Hasan, Member, Executive Bureau, GFTU, Syria.
- ❖ Mrs. Buchra Alchaar, (Interpreter) GFTU, Syria.

- ❖ Com. Violet Jacobeth Seboni, Dy. President, COSATU, South Africa.
- ❖ Com. Sunil Manandhar, President, NTUF, Nepal.
- ❖ Com. Lutfar Rehman, Jt. General Secretary, BTUC, Bangladesh
- ❖ Com. Mahabubur Rehman Majnu, Serectary International Affairs, BTUC, Bangladesh.
- ❖ Com. Idris Ali, RNG Sector, BNC, Bangladesh.
- ❖ Ms. Karuna, Asst. General Secretary, NUBE, Malaysia.
- ❖ Mr. Andre Bogui, Dy. Director, ILO Sub-Regional Office, Delhi, International Labour Organisation (ILO)

National TU leaders addressed the Inaugural/Delegates Session on the 3rd Dec. 2008

- ❖ Com. M.K. Pandhey, President, CITU
- ❖ Com. Thampon Thomas, President, HMS
- ❖ Com. Radhakrishnan, Vice President, AIUTUC
- ❖ Com. Kumaraswamy, President, AICCTU
- ❖ Com. Tiwari, Gen. Secretary, TUCC
- ❖ Sri M.S. Karunakar, BMS
- ❖ Sri. Ramachandran Nair, President, Kerala INTUC

AITUC (TOP) FUNCTIONARIES

(Since inception to Tiruvananthapuram)

Year	President	General Secretary
1920	Lala Lajpat Rai	V.M. Pawar
1921	Joseph Baptista	Diwan Chamanlal
1923	C.R. Das	Diwan Chamanlal
1924	C.R. Das	Diwan Chamanlal
1925	D.R. Thengdi	Diwan Chamanlal
1926	C.F. Andrews V.V. Giri	F.J. Ginwala N.C. Sen
1927	Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad	F.J. Ginwala
1927(Nov.)	Diwan Chamanlal	N.M. Joshi
1928	M. Daud	N.M. Joshi
1929	Jawaharlal Nehru	N.M. Joshi
1931	Subhash Chandra Bose	S.V. Deshpande
1932	J.N. Mishra/ R.S.Ruikar	Mukundlal Sircar
1933	G.L. Khandelkar	Mukundlal Sircar
1935	Harihar Nath Shastri	Sibnath Banerjee
1936	Maniben Kara R.S. Ruikar	R.A. Khedgikar
1938 (Jan.)	Sibnath Banerjee	Maniben Kara
1938 (Apr.)	Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee	B.K. Mukherjee
1940	Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee	R.R. Bakhle
1942	V.R. Kalappa	N.M. Joshi
1943	Chariu Ch. Banerjee V.V. Giri	N.M. Joshi

1945	Fazal Elahi Qurban S.A. Dange	N.M. Joshi
1947	Mrinal Kanti Bose	N.M. Joshi
1949	S.A. Dange	N.M. Joshi
1954	V.Chakkarai Chettiar	S.A. Dange
1957	S.S. Mirajkar	S.A. Dange
1961	S.S. Mirajkar	S.A. Dange
1966	S.S. Mirajkar	S.A. Dange
1970	S.S. Mirajkar	S.A. Dange
1973	Dr. Ranen Sen	S.A. Dange
1976	S.A. Dange	K.G. Sriwastava
1980	S.A. Dange	Indrajit Gupta
1983	Chaturanan Mishra	Indrajit Gupta
1986	Chaturanan Mishra	Indrajit Gupta
1990	M.S. Krishnan	Homi Daji
1994	M.S. Krishnan	A.B. Bardhan B.D. Joshi. Dy. General Secretary
1995 (Nov.)	B.D. Joshi	K.L. Mahendra
1997	J. Chittaranjan	K.L. Mahendra H. Mahadevan, Dy. General Secretary
2001	J. Chittaranjan	Gurudas Das Gupta H. Mahadevan, Dy. General Secretary
2005	Promode Gogoi Gaya Singh, Working President	Gurudas Das Gupta H. Mahadevan, Dy. General Secretary
2008	Promode Gogoi Gaya Singh, Working President	Gurudas Das Gupta H. Mahadevan, Dy. General Secretary

CALENDER OF IMPORTANT EVENTS (Since 38th Session)

December 2005

- 11, November : 35,000 stone quarry workers of Karnataka demonstrated before Assembly in Bangalore.
- 1-4 December : 15th Congress of WFTU in Havana decided, amongst others, to campaign for the right of migrant workers all over the world.
- 13 December : Massive Anti WTO demonstrations and rally at Mumbai Azad Maidan. Thousands of working people participated.
- 13 Dec. 2005 : Massive Anganwadi workers Morcha at Nagpur before Assembly.
- 20 December : Massive protest action against EPF interest rate cut all cover the country.

Year 2006

The year 2006 begun in the background of 38th Session of AITUC and follow up actions of the decision made therein. The 38th Session held in Delhi declared the year 2006 **'the year of organizing the unorganized'**. To build unified struggle for defence of workers' trade union rights, to realize the demands of working masses, to expand and consolidate the organizational strength of AITUC were among the other decisions. The first working committee meeting held in Goa on 21-22 January 2006 discussed the means and ways to implement the decisions of 38th session.

- 2 January 06 : Hundreds of protesting tribals were fired by police at Kaling Nagar in Orissa. 12 tribals were killed. Tribals were protesting against occupation of land by Tata under SEZ.

- 21-2 January 06 : Working Committee of AITUC met at Panjim (Goa) decided as under:
- * To intensify independent as well as the joint struggle against economic and labour policy of UPA Govt.
 - * The meeting identified four states namely Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab for intensive campaign and action on issues concerning implementation of labour laws minimum wage Trade Union rights etc.
 - * To organize March to Parliament of unorganized workers in Delhi.
 - * To convene All India Joint Convention of Industrial Workers in Delhi to chalk out course of action.
- 14-16 Jan. 06 : 23rd Conference of West Bengal AITUC held at Siliguri decided to fight back disastrous economy policy.
- 20 January 06 : Massive Protest Day at Guwahati, Bhopal, Patna against EPF interest rate cut.
- 24-25 Jan. 06 : National Federation of Indian Road Transport Workers Executive meeting held Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) decided to intensify struggle against liquidating state transport corporations.
- 24 January 06 : Huge Rally of electricity employees at Patna against dismantling of the State Electricity Board.
- 31 January 06 : Massive Dharna of Cargo handling Private workers at Visakhapatnam harbour
- 31 January 06 : The Central Govt. declares its intention to private Delhi and Mumbai airports. The workers went on indefinite strikes to protest decision.
- 10-11 Feb. 06 : National Seminar on "Budget : How should it look like".

- 23 February 06 : National Demands Day observed by All India State Govt. Employees Coordination Committee
- 18 February 06 : Massive Rally of Beedi Workers at Sambalpur in Orissa demanding national policy on Tobacco and Uniform National Wage for Beedi workers.
- February 06 : State TU Conference of Pondicherry.
- February 06 : Bihar State Conference of Working Women decided speedy unionization of women under TU
- 17 February 06 : Huge Rally before Assembly in Lucknow against anti labour policy.
- 21 February 06 : Thousands of loading-unloading labour struck work in Guwahati for redressal of grievances.
- 2 March 06 : Protest Rally against visit of US President George Bush to India slogan was "Butcher Bush Go Back".
- 7 March 06 : March to Parliament by State Employees in Delhi in favour of 10 point demands including right to strike. Thousands of teachers participated in procession.
- 6 March 06 : Huge demonstrations of workers at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh to protest against anti labour policy and enforcement of labour laws in the state.
- 8 March 06 : Woman Day observed all over India demanding empowerment of women, 33% reservation in all democratic institutions.
- 9 March 06 : Massive Workers Rally at Jaipur demanding effective enforcement of labour laws in the state.
- 16 March 06 : Strike by handling workers of Guwahati called off on 23rd March with sense of victory.
- 18 March 06 : Huge Rally of Domestic workers in Mumbai.
- 18 March 06 : Massive Dharna of Electricity workers in Lucknow.
- 18 March 06 : A grand seminar of women organised in Kolkata.

- 19 March 06 : National Workshop of CPSTU for new settlements in Public Sector Industries.
- 20 March 06 : Statewide protest demonstration of workers against anti people repressive steps taken by the Tamilnadu State Government.
- 21 March 06 : Over 10,000 workers paraded through the roads of capital city at Bhubaneshwar in scorching heat protesting natural minerals to multi national companies.
- 22 March 06 : Industrial court, Pune restored the recognition of AITUC affiliate union "Poona Employees Union". Earlier Shiv Sena Union captured recognition by unfair means in collaboration of the management. AITUC union won through legal battle.
- 25 March 06 : Massive Joint Workers Rally at Gurgaon to protest against the repression
- 30 March 06 : Huge demonstration of workers before Himachal Assembly at Shimla to protect the interest of unorganised workers.
- 2 April 06 : Over 2.50 lakh workers and officers of State Bank went on strike.
- April 06 : Brutal lathicharge on Roadways workers of Haryana. Workers were protesting against arbitrary decision of private Valvo Bus operation on nationalized roads.
- 19 April 06 : Hindustan Copper Ltd. workers signed settlement with upward revision of wages, fitment etc.
- 20 April 06 : Massive turnout of workers in Punjab state to demand implementation of labour laws, abolition of contract system and upward revisions of minimum wage. The procession and rallies were organized in over 50 towns. There were strikes, processions and workers rallies all over the state. Over one lakhs workers participated

- in the programme. Minimum wage was demanded at Rs.10,000 p.m.
- May Day 06 : Observed nationwide programme with slogan: "Mobilise Global Resistance to Global Threat.
- May 06 : Keonjhar Mines and Forest Workers Union in Orissa started struggle against the closure of mines and handing over to foreign multinational companies. A large number of tribals participated in the struggles.
- 3 May 06 : Demonstration before the 39th Annual meeting of Governor of Asia Development Bank in Hyderabad.
- 6 May 06 : AITUC condemned brutal police lathicharge on Haryana Transport workers at Hissar who were protesting peacefully against the injustice done to them.
- 8 May 06 : 30,000 strong workers rally at Patiala. FCI, agriculture workers, brick kiln and workers engaged in small scale industries participated in the rally.
- May 06 : Contract workers, Daily rated and workers of Gurgaon region consolidated struggle against the repressive action of the government and the management.
- May 2006 : Beedi workers of Sagar, Indore, Gwalior of Madhya Pradesh started struggle for payment of minimum wage and coverage of EPF etc.
- 24 May 2006 : Workers March to Uttarakhand CM Against contract system, payment of minimum wages, comprehensive labour legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers.
- May 2006 : Huge Bank employees rally at Amritsar.
- 25 May 2006 : State level massive convention of unorganized workers held at Guntur decided to launch state-wide agitation for enforcement of labour laws and enactment of protective laws for unorganized workers.

- 13 June 2006 : Massive demonstration in Delhi and other centres against the govt's decision of price hike on petrol diesel. Workers dharnas were organized in state capitals and industrial centres.
- 23 June 2006 : NALCO workers went on indefinite complete strike against disinvestment.
- 30 June 2006 : Total strike in NALCO also total Orissa Bundh against disinvestment. AITUC opposed disinvestments of NALCO, NLC, NMDC etc.
- 4 July 2006 : Neyveli Lignite workers strike.
- 10-12 July 2006 : Visakhapatnam AITUC General Council meeting.
- 15 July 2006 : Countrywide strike of agricultural workers.
- 24 July 2006 : Massive Convention of construction workers of Karnataka in Bangalore.
- 25 July 2006 : National Convention of CTUOs in Delhi decided to go on All India Strike on 14 December.
- 27 July 2006 : All India Convention of Transport workers at Bangalore in solidarity of long drawn of KSRTC workers struggle against the anti labour policy of Karnataka state government.
- August 2006 : Massive Rally of Tribals at Vidisha (Madhya Pradesh)
- 10 Sept. 2006 : UP Workers Convention in Lucknow.
- 24-26 Sep. 2006 : All India Conference of Beedi workers. 30 thousand workers participated in Rally at Siddipet in Andhra Pradesh.
- 5 October 2006 : Police repression on workers of golf classic Resort of Mewat in Haryana.
- 11-12 Oct. 2006 : Khetri Copper Workers Union Conference. Massive Rally.
- 18 October 2006 : Unorganised workers Palledar Conference at Sarhind in Punjab 3000 workers participated in the conference.
- 27 October 06 : Delhi Rickshaw Pullers demonstration before Municipal Corporation.

- 7 November 06 : Raipur Beedi workers Dharna
15 Nov. 2006 : Allahabad Beedi workers Rally.
22 November 06 : Construction workers coming from all over India staged a massive Dharna before Parliament at Janar Mantar Road in Delhi.
23 Nov. 2006 : Delhi Rally of unorganized workers. One Lakh Workers participated.
27 Nov. 2006 : Damoh 25 thousand Beedi worker demonstrated.
6 December 06 : Jabalpur Sagar.
14 Dec. 2006 : National Strike 6 crore workers on strike. Bengal, Kerala, Jharkhand, Bihar observed total Bandh.
20-21 Dec. 06 : WFTU met in Brussels called for intensified joint struggle against capitalist globalization. WFTU has 145 affiliates from 71 countries. The representatives from unaffiliated trade unions like ACFTU, CGTP, CITU, COSATU, ZENOREN, Belarus also attended the meeting.
23 December 06 : Memorandum of understanding was signed between India Oil Corporation and Pipeline Workers Union regarding hike in salaries and other allowances in respect of contract workers working in IOC. The settlement emboldens the moral of contract workers all over India in IOC.
22-23 Dec. 06 : 14th Bihar State Conference of Beedi workers held at Munger (Bihar).

Year 2007

- 2-3 January 07 : Working Committee of AITUC met in Kolkata on 2-3 January 2007 noted as under
- The year of 2006 was the year of struggle and achievement and successes which culminated on 23rd November in Delhi Rally

- Achievement AITUC Membership increased and AITUC Bhawan built etc.
 - Classical system of accumulation of capital on basis of exploitation of labour including peasantry is in full swing under UPA rule.
 - Violation of labour laws has been made agenda for labour minister conference
 - Decided to intensify the struggle against capitalist tyranny, violation of labour laws, contractualisation, outsourcing, under payment, unemployment, lock outs, suspension of production. Longer hours duty for enforcement of labour laws and for enactment of comprehensive labour laws for unorganized workers and agricultural workers.
 - To oppose SEZ.
 - To organize working women in defence of their rights, maternity benefits, for equal wages against discrimination and sexual harassment.
 - To expand and consolidate the organization, recruit TU young cadre particularly from among the women, tribals and scheduled castes.
 - To give left orientation to the trade union movement in the country.
 - to organize a political campaign in the month of May 2007.
 - Date of inauguration of new Aituc Bhawan in Delhi was fixed on May 5, 2007 followed by General Council meeting of AITUC.
 - Welcomed the passage of Tribal's Right Act by Parliament on 14.12.2006 and call upon the tribal people to rise and fight for implementation of the Act.
- 19 January 07 : Campaign against SEZ in Goa a massive rally in Panjim.

- January 2007 : AITUC condemned the execution of Saddam Hussain as murder by puppet Govt. in Iraq established by US occupier.
- 5 January 2007 : 2.50 lakh jute workers of West Bengal, went on indefinite strike in favour of 14 point demand. All TUs in jute. Industry jointly conducted the strike.
- 29 January 07 : Extended AITUC Secretariat meeting call for Satyagraha, Jail Bharo, Rasta Roko agitation all over India to protest the deviation of UPA Govt. and implementation of NCMP in favour of 16 point demand of the Sponsoring Committee.
- January 2007 : Massive Rally at Silchar (Assam) condemning massacre of 75 workers by ULFA gangsters.
- 19 January 07 : 4th National Conference of Anganwadi workers in Hyderabad concluded. It was preceded a colourful huge rally of over 10 thousands women workers.
- 26-28 Jan. 07 : 9th West Bengal State Conference of Municipal workers demanded withdrawal of new pension scheme.
- 27 February 07 : Electricity workers observed unprecedented strike whole state of Bihar plunged into black out. Patna H'Court intervened into the matter.
- 25-27 Feb. 07 : Trade Union Education Camp at Thivendrum. Participants came from Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka.
- 13 Feb. 2007 : Massive Morcha in Panjim demanding regularization of contract workers of PWD and equal pay for equal work.
- 12 Feb. 2007 : Massive Dharna before Goa Labour Commissioner in Panjim by contract workers for failure of labour department.

- 28 Feb. 2007 : Anganwadi workers of Tamilnadu organized massive dharna for increased allocation of fund for Midday Mill & other child development programme.
- 28 February 07 : Anganwadi workers protested against anti labour policy and observed Demands Day all over India.
- 8 March 2007 : International Women Day was observed with new vigour and demanded comprehensive legislation for agricultural and unorganized workers effective implementation of Minimum Wage Act and Enactment of legislation for workers engaged in BPO, call centers etc.
- 7 March 2007 : Day long massive Dharna of defence workers in Delhi to oppose new pension Bill.
- 10 March 2007 : Mid Day Meal serving workers demonstrated before Hyderabad Legislative Assembly Wage hike etc. The slogan was **"Mid Day Meals to Tiny Tots, but Lady cooks remain starving lot."**
- 10 March 2007 : Huge demonstrated of 15000 unorganised workers rallied at Rani Rashmoi Avenue in Kolkata against anti people anti labour policy of the government.
- 11 March 2007 : CPSTU met in Delhi decided to agitate against new conditionalities imposed by the govt. for next wage negotiation like. 10 years tanure of agreements etc.
- 12 March 2007 : Asom Mahila Shramik Union staged a massive women workers March before Assam Assembly in Guwahati.
- 18 March 2007 : Haryana State Committee organized convention against repression unleashed on Gurgaon workers and policy lathi charge at various palces in Haryana State.

- 18 March 2007 : Gujarat state committee organised a big rally at Badodara of unorganized workers.
- 18 March 2007 : Jharkhand State Committee organized a gherao of Raj Bhawan against rampant violation of labour laws.
- 22 March 2007 : Bhubanehswar the capital town of Orissa witnessed a 5000 strong women workers demonstration organized by the State Anganwadi Workers Union. The demonstrating women squatted before the Orissa Assembly and jammed the traffic for hours.
- 29 March 2007 : Over 35,000 workers in Bihar offered court arrest with the slogan "**Adhikar Do Ya Jail Do**" Demands were issuance of BPL Cards to all poor, enforcement of labour laws, payment of minimum wages, enactment of comprehensive labour laws for agricultural and unorganized workers, strengthening of PDS etc.
- 28-30 March 07 : Bank employees 3 day strike against outsourcing and for pension option, compassionate appointment etc.
- 4 April 2007 : Over 20,000 agricultural, beedi, construction, Anganwadi, Domestic workers gathered at Azad Maidan of Mumbai, contract workers of organized sector also participated in big way demanding enforcement of labour laws.
- 12 April 2007 : Anganwadi workes of Karnataka staged a big rally at Bangalore to oppose privatization of Mid-day meal services.
- 12 April 2007 : More than 6000 Mid Day Meal Workers marched through the streets of Bangalore on the call "**Bangalore Chalo**" given bythe Karnataka Rajya Ashara Dasoha Bisi Oota Tayarakara Federation". The demand was to enhance wages.

- 1 May 2007 : May Day observed in Delhi and throughout in the country with slogan "**Labour rights to all**".
- 24 May 2007 : AITUC opposed the draft Bill approved by the Cabinet on unorganized sector workers as it does not fullfil the need of workers.
- 30-31 May 07 : First state level conference of Auto rickshaw workers in Tamilnadu. Huge procession in Khaki uniform moved through streets.
- 24 May 2007 : Beedi workers observed Demand Day in all the beedi manufacturing states demanding uniform national minimum wage and better utilization of welfare fund. All India Beedi, Cigar & Tobacco Workers Federation demanded declaration of balanced national policy on tobacco.
- 13 June 2007 : Airline Two Day Strike began and settled with amicable agreement AITUC played a role in settling the dispute.
- 14 June 2007 : 10,000 strong workers rally in Andhra Pradesh at Kodapa, Gudappa.
- 3 June 2007 : WFTU demanded cancellation of US billion dollar debt imposed on the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America during addressing the 96th International Conference of ILO in Geneva.
- 30 June 2007 : Massive rally of 10,000 workers before the Orissa Assembly at Bhubanehswar demanding scrapping of POSCO deal.
- 23-27 July 07 : Massive Dharna of beedi workers in Patna, Mumbai, Raipur, Bhubaneshwar, Ahmednagar, Akole and many others places demanding payment of minimum wages, adequate supply of Tendue leaves 26 day work in a month and against illegal wage cut in various forms.
- 10 July 2007 : The Joint Action Committee of Bangalore PSUs held a huge rally of 10,000 workers against privtisation and for early wage settlement.

- 9 July 2007 : Punjab State Committee of AITUC decided to phasewise identified struggle in different segment of workforce.
- 11 July 2007 : BSNL workers went on one day strike all over India.
- 18 July 2007 : Sponsoring Committee of CTUs, opposed the non functional draft Bill on unorganized sector workers which has no provision for govt. allocation and enforcing mechanism. The CTUs felt that it will not solve the purpose and demanded a comprehensive protective legislation for unorganized workers.
- 7 July 2007 : 13,000 contract workers of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) went on 12 day strike for regularization of employment. Settlement reached on 19.7.2007 before CLC.
- 25 July 2007 : Gurgaon AITUC observed Solidarity Day.
- 26 July 2007 : Golden Jubilee Conference of Tamilnadu Electricity Federation.
- 31 August 2007 : AIBEA, AIBOA joint petition to PM under "Delhi Chalo" Programme. The slogan was: **"Use people's money for people's welfare"**.
- 12 August 2007 : UP State Committee of AITUC called for intensive struggle against anti people policy of the government.
- 10 August 2007 : State Convention of Kerala Working Women Forum held in Trivandrum.
- 10 August 2007 : Rohtak Engineering Workers demonstrated before DC (Public).
- 25 August 2007 : A.P. Engineering Workers Conference vowed to fight for minimum wage of Rs.7000/-.
- 30 August 2007 : AITUC staged massive dharna before Parliament against setting up the POSCO plant. Memorandum submitted to PM.

- 6 September 07 : Chhatisgarh State Committee targeted to focus on unorganized workers.
- 10 September 07: Tamilnadu AITUC demonstrated in all the district of the State against price rise and unemployment for enacting legislation for unorganized workers.
- 20-30 Oct. 2007 : Thousands of Mid Day Workers of Chhatisgarh squatted before State Secretariat at Raipur.
- 9 October 2007 : Beedi workers of Andhra Pradesh went on indefinite strike. After intervention of CM a settlement was reached.
- 7 October 2007 : Jharkhand State Khet Mazdoor Conference at Baharagodu.
- 7 November 07 : Massive rally of 50,000 agricultural and unorganized workers at Patna.
- 16 November 07 : Massive dharna of five thousand workers before Parliament in Delhi of Road Transport workers coming from all over India.
- 16 November 07 : 700 transport workers squatted at Jantar Mantar coming from all over India.
- 17-18 Nov.2007 : Two day National Seminar on Universal Entitlement of Maternity Benefit was held in Kolkata.
- 20 Nov. 2007 : Dharna at Janar Mantar by petroleum workers.
- 4-5 Dec. 2007 : Conference of contract workers in Delhi.
- 9 December 07 : Goa AITUC demanded compensation to all dead workers who died due to collapse of mines at Tallwm.
- 25 Dec. 2007 : Industrial workers of Rohtak (Haryana) resorted to Road block in protest against high handedness repression of the authorities.
- 26 Dec. 2007 : A big rally held at Jalah of Baksa District (BTAD) of unorganized workers in Bodoland.
- 27 Dec. 2007 : Massive demonstration and rally took place at Jagdalpur (Baster) in Chhatisgarh in which thousands of Mid Day Workers participated.

YEAR 2008

- 20-21 Jan.2008 : Two day General Council meeting held in Chennai decided to collect one crore signature of working people to be submitted to Speaker of Lok Sabha.
- 23 Jan. 2008 : Sponsoring Committee of TUs met in Delhi decided to launch intensive struggle on higher phase.
- 14-15 Jan. 08 : WFTU's Presidential Council met in Khartoum (Sudan) chalked out allround Action Plan for 2008.
- 8 January 08 : All India Demands Day observed all over the country for securing the rights of contract workers.
- 28-29 Jan. 08 : Assam Domestic workers Union conducted two day training programme.
- January 2008 : UP transport workers demonstrated before Lucknow Assembly facing water cannon. Several injured.
- 31 January 08 : Contract worker of Bokaro Steel Plant went on one day token strike.
- January 2008 : Massive dharna of beedi workers held in Raipur the capital town of Chhatisgarh.
- 16 Feb. 2008 : Paschim Bang Nirman Shramik Federation formed.
- 9 February 08 : Beedi workers of Gondia in Maharastra demonstrated violating ban imposed by administration.
- 4 Feb. 2008 : A big workers rally at Noida.
- 21 Feb. 2008 : North Eastern contract workers convention held Nukmaligarh.
- 5 March 2008 : Domestic workers of Maharastra State marched the State Assembly demanding social security.
- 11-13 March 08 : Contract workers of Bokaro Steel Plant struck for three days and won settlement on payment of equal wage for equal work.

- 12 March 2008 : Victory struggle of Anganwadi workers of Orissa. Ten thousand women workers jammed the entire road leading to Assembly.
- 15 March 2008 : Huge rally of Mid Day Meal at Bangalore.
- 12 March 2008 : Demonstration all over Tamilnadu held against decision of handing over welfare measures to Revenue Department.
- 31 March 2008 : Massive demonstration before Himachal Assembly at Shimla.
- 31 March 2008 : Huge procession and rally of Hamal workers at Hyderabad.
- 3 April 2008 : Contract workers demonstrated in Chennai demanding confirmation.
- 10 April 2008 : Working Women Forum organized Dharna at Alleppey and other district headquarters.
- 21 April 2008 : Agreement reached between contract workers and HAL management on pay hike etc.
- 23 April 2008 : Rajasthan roadways employees demonstrated at Jaipur.
- 28 April 2008 : Tamilnadu Fish workers launched Rail Roko agitation.
- 27 April 2008 : Rajasthan Textile Women Convention in Beawar.
- 12 May 2008 : One crore working men's signature presented to the Speaker Lok Sabha against price rise, enforcement of labour laws etc.
- 5 May 2008 : Ricksha Chalak demonstration in Delhi.
- 26 May 2008 : Tamilnadu construction workers conference. Massive procession and rally was organized on the occasion.
- 4 June 2008 : A big rally was held in Srinagar. Thousands of workers mainly Anganwadi workers gathered from all over J&K.

- 7-8 June 2008 : Maharastra Anganwadi conference at Nagpur resolved to Halla Bole" agitation.
- 14 June 2008 : Rally at Jodhpur in Rajasthan of Auto Ricksha Drivers.
- 16 June 2008 : 15 day strikes of Neyveli Contract Workers concluded with victory.
- 6 June 2008 : Diamond workers struggle Gujarat police fired at the demonstrators.
- 17 June 2008 : Maharastra farmers blocked Mumabi-Goa Road to protest against acquisition of land for SEZ.
- 18 June 2008 : Militant demonstration at Korba in Chhatisgarh of unorganized workers.
- 28-29 June 08 : **General Council meeting at Bokaro, AITUC demanded UPA Govt. to quit.**
- 10 July 2008 : Agitating Anganwadi workers of J&K faced lathi charge in Srinagar.
- 13 July 2008 : National Conference of Trade Unions held in Delhi called for general strike on 20 August 2008.
- 8 July 2008 : Dharna of beedi workers in capitals of beedi manufacturing states.
- 9 July 2008 : Massive Mahadharna at Jaipur by Rajasthan Roadways workers.
- 6 July 2008 : Massive Rally at Bhavanagar (Gujarat) one killed in police firing.
- 8 July 2008 : Joint Convention at Chandigarh to prepare for nationwide strike.
- 12 July 2008 : Joint Convention of CTUs at Patna to prepare to Strike.
- 13 July 2008 : Joint Convention of CTUs at Bhopal for general strike.
- 9 July 2008 : Roadways workers of Rajasthan dharna in Transport Minister's constituency.

- 13 July 2008 : Joint Convention of CTUs at Jaipur to prepare for nationwide strike.
- 15 July 2008 : Settlement won in Port and Docks, strike called off.
- 19 July 2008 : CPSTU Convention at Bhopal.
- 20 July 2008 : Convention at Dibrugarh in Assam.
- 21 July 2008 : Joint Convention at Hyderabad to prepare for nation wide strike.
- 24 July 2008 : AITUC's convention at Jalandhar (Punjab).
- 28 July 2008 : 10,000 AASHA Karmachari mostly women demonstrated at Patna.
- 29 July 2008 : Joint demonstration of women in Jaipur.
- 30 July 2008 : Massive demonstration by Sponsoring Committee of CTUs in Delhi.
- 8 August 2008 : Haryana Roadways employees struck for 3 hours road paralyzed.
- 20 August 08 : National wide general industrial strike successfully observed by 8 crore workers all over India.**
- 7 Sept.2008 : Militant demonstration of Guest Teachers of Haryana at Rohtak police fired. One young lady teacher named Rajrani was killed by police.
- 24-25 Sept. 08 : Successful Two Day Strike of Bank employees.