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Reflections of the 111th session of ILO

Vahidha Nizam



Vahidha Nizam addressing

The 111th Session of the International Labour Organisation was held from 5th to 16th June 2023 in Geneva. From India, the tripartite group consisting of the workers, employers and the government participated. The workers group consisted of 15 members including 5 from BMS, 2 each from AITUC, HMS and CITU and one each from AICCTU, UTUC and AIUTUC and LPF. INTUC was not given representation this year also in a row since 2018. All the Central Trade Unions had registered their protest against this deliberate bias of the BJP government.

set out a vision for advancing social justice and promoting decent work. The session proceeded with an institutional precision. Credentials Committee, Finance Committee, Committee on Application of Standards, General Affairs Committee, Standard Setting Committee on Apprenticeships, Recurrent discussion committee on labour protection and General Discussion Committee on a just transition met.

Committees of Worker groups, employers groups and the governments discussed separately and converged together in the plenary on the discussed drafts. The governing body elected its officers for the period 2023-2024. The ILC came to an end with the adoption of a new recommendation on quality apprenticeships and a resolution on just transition and labour protection. Standards report and the Budget were adopted. A resolution on Belarus concerning the



Indian Delegation to 111th ILC in Geneva alongwith Minister of Labour and Employment

Worker, employer and government delegates from the 187 member states of the ILO participated and deliberated upon a wide range of issues including quality apprenticeships, labour protection and a just transition towards sustainable and inclusive economies.

Report of the Director General Gilbert F Hougbo

measures recommended by the Governing body under article 33 of the ILO constitution on the was adopted too.

AITUC Participation

K P Rajendiran participated in the committee on labour protection and Vahidha Nizam in the Discussion

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committee on just transition. We could make active interventions in the respective committees of the workers group as well as in the plenary session. Some of our propositions were accepted and incorporated in the resolutions.

K P Rajendran highlighted the erosion in the workers rights and protection in the third world countries particularly after the onset of the economic globalization. The shift in the means of production and labour relations in the liberalized market environment pose new challenges to the workers organizations. Social protection is becoming a utopian dream for the workers in the unorganized sector. Covid pandemic has aggravated the sufferings further while the industries and governments take advantage of the financial crisis to impose burden on the workers.

Welcoming the landmark decision of ILO to include Occupational Safety and Health as fundamental rights at work, KP Rajendran said that these commitments remain on paper since the member countries flagrantly violate the fundamental conventions of the ILO. In

this context he placed the Government of India's anti workers labour codes and said the Central Trade Unions had lodged complaint with the ILO's governing body too.

The global working conditions are replete with decent work deficit. In this background the aspirations for millennium development goals only sound empty and meaningless rhetorics. ILO's labour protection recommendations should find real meaning in their implementation. Minimum wages, social security and maternity benefits should be included as fundamental rights of all workers including the informal sector and the agricultural sector.

In the committee of Just transition Vahidha Nizam said that Just transition will be just only if it is 'just' to the workers. The ILO agenda and proposal for just transition should not be a 'one size fits all'. Developing countries' and the under developed countries' industrial and economic advancement should be taken into account while addressing the issue. There should be distinction between burning 'survival fuel' and 'luxury fuel'. The developed countries that have been

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Submission made by K.P. Rajendran in the session

The Government of India recently introduced four new labor codes, which amalgamate 29 existing labor laws. Unfortunately, these labor codes have curtailed the rights of labor protection, minimum wage, regular employment, social security, rights to organize and collective bargaining, and other legal protections currently enjoyed by workers.

The four labor codes, which are anti-employees and pro-employer, are as follows:

(i) Code on Wages, 2019



K.P. Rajendran submitting his points

(ii) Industrial Relations Code, 2020

(iii) Code on Social Security, 2020; and

(iv) Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.

Majority of workers in India are demanding that these labor codes be withdrawn. They unanimously request that the International Labor Organization intervene strongly to repeal these codes and protect the fundamental rights of workers. The 10 central trade union organizations recognized by the Government of India have already held two national strikes demanding the withdrawal of the labor codes. Strong agitations and campaigns are being continued. The action committee of 10 central trade unions has also decided to organize a series of agitations on a national basis starting from August 9, which will culminate in a one-day national strike in January 2024 if the demand of the workers is not conceded.

Amarjeet Kaur, General Secretary AITUC

K.P.Rajendran, Vice President AITUC

Vahida Nizam, Secretary AITUC ■

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responsible for polluting the earth emitting lions share of greenhouse gases that led to the climate crisis. They are responsible for 79% of the carbon emissions. They have the historical responsibility to address the dangers. But the developed countries have not complied with their commitments of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Climate Agreement. Just Transition agenda should be discussed in this background. Vahidha Nizam also pointed out that the carbon emission through crypto currency mining constitutes 0.5% of the total carbon emission. This being the case, to accomplish 2% reduction in carbon emission through just transition policies will mean the workers bearing the brunt while the rich continue to pollute. This is unjust.

In discussing the draft resolution Vahidha Nizam on behalf of the developing countries and the global South in particular emphasized that the Industrial policies that may be envisaged should not lead to affect the carbon intensive industries. Transition should be in phased manner for the developing and the under developed world. MSMEs should be protected from the carbon tax that might be imposed by the Carbon Border Maintenance of the EU. Policies to rehabilitate, reskill and reinstitute the workers should be put in place.

In a nutshell, it could be felt with serious concern that the developed world and the global corporate exercise their gripping arm around the ILO and the ILO too seems giving into pressure.

Ostracism of INTUC, a major Trade Union in the country from all the tripartite and international forums is boiling in the cauldron. AITUC reiterated with seriousness the deliberate exclusion of INTUC in

the ILC since the year 2018. The Platform of Central Trade Unions had given its representation protesting against the biased repudiation of INTUC. Para 87 of the resolution of the credentials committee of the 111th ILC which reaffirmed its consistent line of jurisprudence in the internal conflict of an organization and emphasized the lack of jurisdiction to examine the dispute. Reiterating its stand taken on this issue when it was first reported to the credentials committee in 2018, the report states, "the Committee calls upon it (the government of India) once again to re-double its efforts so that the nomination of the Workers' delegation of India to future sessions of the Conference will be in full compliance with article 3(5) of the ILO Constitution".

Besides, AITUC also reemphasised its objection to the restrictions imposed by the government on the nomination of its workers' advisors to the ILC. In this matter too, in response to the report of the Central Trade Unions to the Credentials Committee of the 111th ILC, the credential committee has clearly stated in para 88, "As the Committee has stressed in the past, governments must accept the most representative organizations' choice regarding the persons they nominate. Refusal to do so is a clear violation of their obligation under article 3 (5) of the ILO Constitution. The Committee trusts that the Government will take the necessary action to rescind such a restriction with immediate effect, thus permitting the social partners to designate their representatives in complete independence from Government interference".

We trust that the ministry will make a prudent and judicious review of its position of prejudice against INTUC and in respect of the right of CTU to nominate its representatives as guided by the ILC. ■

AITUC submission to the High Commissioner of Human Rights being handed over by Vahida Nizam and KP Rajendran to the CTC leader Comrade Ismael

Vahidha Nizam and KP Rajendran handing over a copy of the written statement sent by AITUC to The High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, Geneva, in support of the report presented by the Socialist Republic of Cuba to the Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights Record conducted by the UNHR Council. Comrade Ismael from CTC Cuba received the report with absolute comradery and conveyed solidarity and appreciation on behalf of CTC Cuba.



Letter to Minister of Labour on the 111th ILC of ILO in Geneva

28th June 2023

To,

Shri Bhupender Yadav
Minister for Labour and Employment
Union Government of India, New Delhi

Dear Shri Bhupender Yadav ji,

Sub: Reflections on Worker Delegation to 111th ILC of ILO in Geneva.

All India Trade Union Congress places its concerns and view points as reflections of the report obtained from our representatives Vahidha Nizam (Ismail Vahitha Parveen) and K P Rajendran who had participated in the 111th ILC as advisors from AITUC. We are obliged to share our perspectives with serious concern to better our performance in future in order to play effective, reasonable and result oriented interventions in the agendas that concern the workers and also the industry and economy.

On a pleasant note, AITUC expresses its appreciation and gratitude to the Permanent Mission of India and the officials of the Indian Embassy in Geneva for the reportedly overwhelming hospitality extended to our members throughout their stay. We are informed that the officers had rendered their full cooperation and assistance to make the Indian team feel comfortable and at home. We thank them.

That said, AITUC is constrained to put forth certain observations and suggestions for rectification.

Ostracism of INTUC, a major Trade Union in the country from all the tripartite and international forums is boiling in the cauldron. AITUC reiterates and marks with seriousness the deliberate exclusion of INTUC in the ILC since the year 2018. The Platform of Central Trade Unions has given its representation protesting against the biased repudiation of INTUC. In this context, we draw your attention to para 87 of the resolution of the credentials committee of the 111th ILC which reaffirms its consistent line of jurisprudence in the internal conflict of an organization and emphasizes the lack of jurisdiction to examine the dispute. Reiterating its stand taken on this issue when it was first reported to the credentials committee in 2018, the report states, "the Committee calls upon it (the government of India) once again to re-double its efforts so that the nomination of the Workers' delegation of India to future sessions

of the Conference will be in full compliance with article 3(5) of the ILO Constitution".

Besides, AITUC also reemphasises its objection to the restrictions imposed by the government on the nomination of its workers' advisors to the ILC. In this matter too, in response to the report of the Central Trade Unions to the Credentials Committee of the 111th ILC, the credential committee has clearly stated in para 88, "As the Committee has stressed in the past, governments must accept the most representative organizations' choice regarding the persons they nominate. Refusal to do so is a clear violation of their obligation under article 3 (5) of the ILO Constitution. The Committee trusts that the Government will take the necessary action to rescind such a restriction with immediate effect, thus permitting the social partners to designate their representatives in complete independence from Government interference".

AITUC trusts that the ministry will make a prudent and judicious review of its position of prejudice against INTUC and in respect of the right of CTU to nominate its representatives as guided by the ILC. We appeal to the Ministry to act to comply with the provisions of the ILO Constitution.

With regard to the possible impacts that the workers group from India could have made in the Committees on Quality Apprenticeship, Labour Protection and Just Transition, AITUC is given to understand that there was no coordination in nominating titular members into the committees who could have played a decisive role in the drafting committees. The nomination of titular members into the committees was unilaterally decided by the delegate of the workers group. This unilateral over reach had to pay a very dear price. It imperiled effective intervention in the drafting committees. This failure is perceived with all seriousness in the context that India has a major role to represent the global south as the voice of the developing and the under developed world. AITUC expresses its deep dismay that this responsibility

could not be discharged due to the lapse in mobilizing the collective wisdom. This should be addressed with all seriousness before the next session of the ILC and rectified conscientiously.

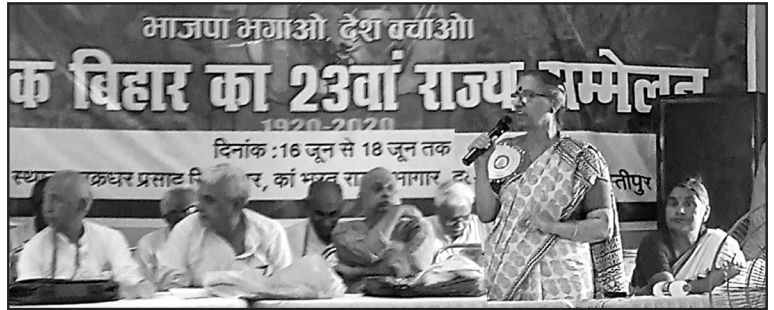
Finally, but most importantly, AITUC is appalled to know that the authorities of the Permanent Mission of

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STATE/SECTOR

23rd State conference of Bihar AITUC held successfully

The 23rd conference of Bihar state AITUC held in Dak Banglo, Dalsingh Sarai, Samastipur from 16th to 18th June 2023 successfully with participation of about 250 delegates from 60 unions in various sectors of formal and informal economy. The premises were named after Comrade Chakkerdhar Prasad Singh and the hall was named as Bharat Rai Hall. On the first day a procession was taken out from Dak Banglo after hoisting of Flag by Amarjeet



Amarjeet Kaur inaugurate delegate session



A view of dias in the public meeting held on 16th June

Kaur General Secretary AITUC, which passed through various streets, on the way garlanding of the statue of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose culminating in a public meeting in the stadium of Chhatterdhari High School. The procession was led by Amarjeet Kaur, Ramnaresh Pande, Ajay Kumar Singh, Ghaznafar Nawab, Usha Sahni, Ramvilas Sharma, Satyanarain Mehto among others. The rally was addressed by Amarjeet Kaur, Ramnaresh Pande, Ajay MLA, Vinod Kumar Sameer among others. The speakers exposed the anti people, anti national

policies of the Government which have resulted in increased prices of essential commodities, unemployment rate, corruption making the life of common man miserable. The corporates Indian and foreign brand are being given all concessions in taxation, and other incentives to maximize their profits at the cost of wages of labour and the welfare benefits to the workers. The policies of privatisation, outsourcing and contractorisation are rampant, job security in danger, unionisation being made difficult, derecognition made easier. The codification of labour laws is aimed to weaken collective bargaining and any resistance to government policies. The true face of ruthless government was visible during the Covid Pandemic period when workers suffered and billionaire added to their numbers as well as amassed huge wealth. The rising inequality and unemployment amongst youth is worrisome. The government having no answers to the people's issues has further resorted to communalise

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India had called for a meeting of the 'workers delegates' in which the Minister of Labour and Employment had delivered a speech and discourse on 'yoga sutra'. AITUC takes a very strong objection to the Minister of Labour and Employment to speak about 'yoga sutra' on an occasion, which has absolutely no relevance to workers issues, especially when the CTUs have been forced to write to the ILO regarding contraventions of ILO conventions by Indian Government. It is misuse of power and authority and all the more a travesty to exercise it on an occasion of an international forum in

a foreign land. This desperation could well have been avoided.

AITUC is happy to know that the Minister had met the workers group members and assured to call for a meeting of the CTUs sooner. We are looking forward to it.

All India Trade Union Congress writes this with paramount responsibility and commitment to draw the MOLE to act appropriately and prudently to make the best use of the ILO sessions.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Amarjeet Kaur, General Secretary ■

BCCL Regional committee holds meeting



JBCCI member and President AITUC Com. Ramendra Kumar addressed the regional committee and informed about the wage agreement arrived at and the pending issues in an commemoration meeting called by the BCCL regional committee. The participants expressed their satisfaction on the wage agreement. The meeting was also addressed by Ashok Yadav General Secretary Jharkhand AITUC. ■

Anganwadi union workers' agitation brings benefits in Madhya Pradesh

The Anganwadi Workers had organised strike actions from 15 to 30th March in the state of Madhya Pradesh and later on continued the mobilisations at various level for pressurising govt to accept their demands. The state government has announced finally an increase of Rs3000/ to Anganwadi and Rs1500 to Helpers, Rs1000 to them for Ladli Laxmi Yojna. The workers to be paid Rs one and half lakh and Helpers to be paid one lakh and twenty five thousands as retirement benefits.

The announcement also included an insurance on accident of Rs 5 lakh. However the AITUC affiliated Anganwadi unions' leaders Vibha Pande and Gayatri Vajpai said that they are still pursuing the court case and asking for the arrears to workers and Helpers as per court directions. Those who retired in 2018 and since then never got the announced amount by the Chief Minister at that time which was one lakh for workers and seventy five thousands for Helpers. They said the battle is on to achieve justice. ■

Contd. from pre. page: 23rd State conference of Bihar and polarize the society on caste and religious lines endangering the unity and harmony in the society. The leaders called for giving marching orders to Modi Government in 2024 having failed on every front. The conference began with open session. Election of presidium, and other committees for conduct of the conference, adoption of time table and agenda. The conference was presided by five members presidium including Ajay Kumar Singh, Janki Paswan, Usha Sahni, Chanderawati Devi and Kumar Bindeshwar. After adoption of condolence resolution, welcome speech was delivered by Vinod Kumar Sameer on behalf of reception committee. Comrade Amarjeet Kaur

inaugurated the conference and wanted the comrades to deliberate on the call of Central Trade Unions, chalk out action programmes for the coming period, plan for expansion of organisation in new sectors and consolidation of the existing unions. The greeting messages were given by the leaders of CITU, AIUTUC, AICCTU, TUCC, AIFUCTO.

Comrade Ramnaresh Pande greeted the delegates on behalf of Bihar state CPI. Ghaznafar Nawab General Secretary presented report since last conference, about 40 comrades participated, and 15 resolutions were presented and adopted. The General secretary report was adopted, audit reports of accounts and credential committee were also presented. The conference elected 101 members State Council, 45 member working committee and 19 member office bearers. Ghaznafar Nawab as President, Ajay Kumar Singh as General Secretary, D P Yadav and Usha Sahni as Deputy General Secretaries, Kumar Bindeshwar, Narain Purbe, Janaki Paswan, Bharat Jha, Chanderavati as Vice presidents, Ramvilas Sharma, Haridev Thakur, Amrit Prasad, Kaishlendra Verma, Promod Kumar Nandan as Secretaries. T.P. Verma was elected as treasurer and Amarnath as asstt. treasurer. ■



A procession taken out on the streets of Dalsingh

SCRAP THE NOTIFICATION PROHIBITING STRIKE IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IN GOA – AITUC

Christopher Fonseca, General Secretary

26/06/2023 : The Goa State Committee of All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) vehemently opposes the Notification dated 16/06/2023 issued by the Goa Government to invoke “Goa Essential Maintenance Act, 1988” prohibiting STRIKE in the manufacture, packaging, distribution and transportation of pharmaceuticals products and components thereof in Goa. This Notification is outright Anti-People and an infringement of basic Trade Union and Human Rights.

The AITUC is of the firm opinion that the Notification prohibiting STRIKE in the Pharmaceutical Industry is undemocratic, unconstitutional, ultra-virus, illegal, done at the behest and in collusion with the PHARMA Companies, purely meant to compromise and trample under-foot the basic Trade Union Rights, Right to form Trade Unions, Right to collective-bargaining; Implementation of Industrial Disputes Act, Factories Act and other Welfare Labour Legislations which many of the pharma companies are blatantly violating and instead, adopting the policy of 'Hire & Fire'. It is well-known that several PHARMA companies operating in Verna and other Industrial Estates are violating the statutory provisions of beneficial labour legislations with impunity!

The Trade Union Rights, Right to Collective Bargaining, Right of 8-hours Work, Right to Fixed Weekly-off Day, Right of Overtime at double the rate of wages, for working on extended hours are under serious attack in many Pharma companies with active support of Government of Goa. The Labour Department and The Inspectorate of Factories & Boilers have miserably failed to curb the above illegalities. These Pharma companies are frequently using Police to suppress and curb legitimate Trade Union activities of the workers. In the meanwhile, the Industrial disputes raised before the competent Labour Authorities are lying dormant without any potent and effective intervention!

The Right to form Trade Union is guaranteed to every working citizen in our country under Article 19 (1) (a) (b) of the Constitution of India which also upholds the freedom of speech and expression. But this fundamental

right is under severe attack in many Pharma companies in Verna Industrial Estate.

Ever since the workers have formed the trade union of their choice, some of the Pharma Companies have started selectively harassing and victimizing the unionized workers with the active support and connivance of Goa Government, Home Ministry and the Police. The unionized workers are implicated in false cases with the sole intention to undermine the union and to spread fear in the minds of the workers. Several Pharma companies have summarily terminated the services of all those workmen who have taken a lead to form the Trade Union of their choice in blatant violation of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and rules, without following the Principles of Natural Justice and without issuing the basic Show- cause, Charge Sheet or holding a fair and impartial - enquiry.

Moreover, the services of many Unionised workers employed in these PHARMA companies have been either summarily terminated or transferred to far-off places such as Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Patalganga, Baddi, Aurangabad and other locations to undermine and wipe-out the Union and make the Company UNION-MUKT!

The AITUC demands immediate scrapping of the Notification dated 16/06/2023 issued by the Government of Goa, declaring the Pharmaceutical Sector as an Essential Service under Goa Essential Maintenance Act, 1988. Failing this, the AITUC and its Fraternal trade unions will wage a relentless struggles to protect the basic fundamental and democratic rights of the workers working in Pharma companies.

The AITUC – calls upon all the workers in Goa, including those in the Pharma sector to unitedly Oppose and Protest against these Anti-Workers Notification by waging united struggles irrespective of union affiliations.■

**This issue of TUR was edited by
Sukumar Damle, National Secretary, AITUC**

BBMB organises retirees



The retirees of Bhaghra Byas projects held their meeting and founded the All India BBMB retirees union and elected Mohan Lal Verma as President and Gurnam Singh Aulakh as General Secretary. In 31 members working committee Harvant Singh and Karamchand were elected as Vice presidents, Baburam and Sarjit Singh as Deputy General secretary and Mohan Lal Saini as Treasurer. They resolved to fight for the demands of retirees and extend support to the employees union. ■

BBMB Meeting in Jagadhari

BBMB holds its meeting in Jagadhari to apprise the workers about the ongoing struggle of the union on its demands including relay hunger strike. The meeting presided over by Ramnath was addressed by Derpak Kumar Trivedi, Mohan Lal Verma, Ramesh Kumar among others. They appealed to continue their sound support to the ongoing struggles. ■



Relay Hunger Strike ends

Relay hunger strike ended with promises from the management for taking up negotiations to resolve issues. The special secretary of the Board Shri Ajay Kumar, the Union leaders Deepak Kumar Trivedi and Mohan Lal Verma were among those present to offer juice to hunger strikers. ■



"Save Roadways - Save Employment"

The Joint Front of Rajasthan State Roadways Employees Union - AITUC, Rajasthan Roadways Workers Union - CITU, Rajasthan Roadways Mazdoor Congress - INTUC, RSRTC Retired Employees Association, Rajasthan Roadways Retired Employees Welfare Committee has resolved to launch a sustained agitation for the above demand from 01 July 2023.

** On July 01, 2023, a state-level conference of more than three hundred office bearers / workers of the constituent organizations of the Joint Front will be organized in auditorium of the "Pink City Press Club" located in front of the Narayan Singh Circle Bus Stand in Jaipur.

** From July 05, 2023 to August 07, 2023, a separate joint group of office bearers of the constituent organizations of the Joint Front will run a campaign

to organize general meetings of serving and retired employees at all roadways units located across the state.

** On August 11, 2023, a huge state-level joint rally will be organized in Jaipur. If the demands are not accepted by the Roadways Management and the State Government by the state level rally, then the next phases of the movement will be announced, which will include a 24-hour statewide strike.

The demand letter of the proposed action was made public on 01 July 2023 on the occasion of the state level conference of the Joint Front. The detailed circular of the constituent organizations of the Joint Front was issued on June 27, 2023.

M. L. Yadav, State Coordinator, Joint Front of Rajasthan State Roadways Employees Unions, Jaipur ■

STATE/SECTOR

The corporate level Bipartite meeting of the NMDC held

The introductory meeting between the management of NMDC and the newly elected leadership of All India NMDC Workers Federation was held on 13th June 2023 at Hyderabad in the NMDC head office. The meeting held in cordial environment was attended by from the management side by the CMD Shri Amitabh Mukherjee, Director Production Shri D.K. Mohanty, Director Finance Shri Sureshan Vishavnathan, Director Technology Shri Vinay Kumar, Nagarnaar Steel Plant Additional Director K. Praveen Kumar, VIOM from Kirandul Padamnashan Naik, VIOM of Bachel Chief General Manager V. Venkateshwarulu, DIOA-Donamalai Chief General Manager Sanjeev Sahi, from Diamond Project Panna. Shridhar, from NMDC headquarter Satyendra Rai and several others from different projects. From the workers side the office bearers of the Federation

1969-70 and has reached 39 million by 2017-2018 and now in 2020-2021 it has crossed 40 million tons. They said the target is to reach 100 million. This company is Navratna and the objective is to make it Maharatna and for that the expansion work from iron ore mining to other areas would be taken up. From workers side Com. Amarjeet Kaur stressed frequent dialogue with unions and for any important decision the unions must be taken on board before finality prior to notifications. She narrated the history of trade unions in India and the role played by working class in the freedom movement and for achieving the rights through struggles pre-independence and then post Independent India. She emphasised on safety and better facilities at work. V.S. Giri wanted policy level discussions and industrial level cordial relations to be maintained through regular



included President of Federation Amarjeet Kaur, Vice Presidents Vidya Sagar Giri, G. Satyajit Reddy, Rajesh Sandhu, General Secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh, the other vice presidents and the secretaries of respective units included A.K. Singh, T.J. Shivshankar Rao, Ashish Yadav, Samar Bahedur Singh, Bhola Prasad Soni, G.Srinivas, B. Somshkhar, Ramayan Prasad Sahu, Shagir Ilkanis, B.B. Durga Rao, Sain Kumar, SUR Koteswar Rai, K.A. Kanthiya, Mahendra Singh John, Vinyendra Nath Mathew, K.Y. Ravishankar.

This federation has unique character being a single federation in NMDC with AITUC, INTUC and BMS affiliated unions being part of this federation. These leaders belong to their respective central trade unions AITUC, INTUC and BMS to which their units are affiliated to.

The views were expressed and presentations were made by CMD, Director (Production), Director (Finance) and Director (Technology) and some other officials. They informed that production in NMDC began in

consultations. Sanjay Kumar Singh presented the concerns as finalised in the meeting of the federation chaired by Amarjeet Kaur held before the introductory meeting. The meeting concluded on positive notes. Next day the wage negotiations were taken forward by the committee constituted for the purpose. ■

Kerala AITUC in Action



Private Motor Workers Federation AITUC, March to the Secretariat, Kerala state Govt. in Thiruvananthapuram. KP Rajendran addressing the meeting

Joint Forum of Trade Unions Associations and Welfare groups in General Insurance organise Special Convention in Southern Zone

A Special Convention was organised on 24th June in Devaneyya Pavanar Library Meeting Hall, Anna Salai, Chennai by the Joint Forum of GIC Unions/Associations from Southern zone.

The Focus of the convention was on their demands: * Merger of four Public Sector General Insurance Companies(PSGI companies) * Stop closure and merger of offices in PSGI companies * For recruitment in all cadres ; * Withdrawl of performance linked Wage

The convention was chaired by the Convenor of JFTU-SZ with his presidential remarks. Those who addressed the convention included Amarjeet Kaur

A detailed resolution was presented detailing the reasons for demands and various speakers endorsed the resolution with their additional points for justification of demands.

The speakers emphasized the great role played in providing services on reasonable price to the people, enhancing and implementing the welfare schemes of the governments-states and centre to the needy sections of the society and that is why the strengthening of the PS companies is in the peoples and national interest.

The union leaders pledged to continue their demands and agitations to achieve them. ■



General Secretary AITUC and President of GIEAIA, SU.Thirunavukkarasar -Member Parliament, Dr A Chellakumar- Member Parliament, Amanulla Khan former President AIIEA, Tirlok Singh General Secretary GIEAIA, G Jayamurthy (AIGISC/ST Parishad), Rohit Argal (UIIOA), KS Shastry (NICOA), A Kalpana Rajkumar (AIGIOBCEF), VS Venkataraman(GIRA), Sanjay Jha (AIIEA), S Balakumar (AIGISC/STEW), S Vasudevan(AIGIFWA), P Tamil Sekaran(OICOA), V Murugan(GINCEWA), R Narsimhan(AIIPA), Darshan Kumar Wadhwa(GIEAIA Officers' wing).



The Meeting of the GIEAIA Employees and Officers of Tamilnadu being addressed by Amarjeet Kaur

STATE/SECTOR

Domestic workers demand Welfare Board in every state hold protest, want recommendations of ILO Convention fulfilled

AMRITSAR JUNE 16: It's been 12 years since the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted convention 189 seeking decent work for domestic workers in its historic centenary convention in 2011 in Geneva.

Nevertheless, successive Central Government failed to take any measures to improve the condition of domestic workers even after the Covid -19 pandemic when domestic workers were hit hard and rendered jobless.

Amar Singh Asal, a prominent CPI leader said the leadership in the country needed to be refined on the conditions of domestic workers, a lot of whom were warren. They were devalued both in economic and social terms he pointed workers belonged to an unorganized sector and lack job security.

As domestic workers are not recognized as essential service providers, they don't figure in any of the state or the Union Government social security packages or projects. Neither had they set aside any funds in the budgets for their social security said Asal.



He said as private homes were not recognized as workplaces it was the main hurdle in framing any policies in the domestic worker sector.

In order to mark International Domestic workers Day. Women domestic workers on Friday held a protest march demanding the implementation of recommendations of the ILO convention adopted in

Geneva.

Speaking on the occasion Daswinder Kaur, all India president of All India Domestic Labour Federation demanded the formation of domestic workers welfare board in every state in the country, She said the government should ensure 5 percent of the property tax to be deposited with the board for the welfare of domestic helpers.

She said social security schemes for construction labourers should also be implemented for domestic workers. She said the government should also frame a policy for minimum wages, social security schemes, health services and pension for them.

(Source: TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE) ■

International Domestic Workers Day - 16th June observed



Babli Rawat addressing meeting in Mumbai

Chhattisgarh Trade Unions hold joint meeting for campaign

Meeting of Joint Trade Union Forum Chhattisgarh was held on 30 June 2023 at Life Insurance Corporation Office Raipur. In the meeting the plan of action was decided on the direction of the National Convention of Workers held in Delhi on January 30, 2023 under the platform of Central Trade Unions. A unanimous decision has been taken that August 9, 2023, which is a historic day Of Quit India movement against British colonial rule, the trade unions will organise Mahapadav

against the anti-people, anti-labour, anti-farmer, and anti-constitutional policies of Mr Narendra Modi Government. The government made false promises to the people knowing well that these are never to be fulfilled. Speaking lies have been the hallmark of the government and it is the high time that the citizens get rid of these lies in the coming period by giving marching orders in general elections in 2024, to save people, to save nation. ■

No improvement in No guaranteed NPS can replace the defined guaranteed Old Pension Scheme

C.Srikumar

The Central Government and State Government employees are in the battle field demanding to scrap the no guaranteed and Contributory NPS implemented by the Vajpayee led BJP Government for the Government employees recruited on or after 1st January 2004. It is now 20 years after the implementation of NPS. However all the propaganda made by the government and the self-claimed experts that NPS is a wonderful pension scheme and that the employees will get huge amount as pension after retirement has been completely exposed. After the employees contributed 10% of his wages every month and the government contributes 14% of the concerned employees' wages to the NPS Pension fund, the retiring employees are not getting more than Rs. 2000 to 4000 per month. The Central Government and the State Government employees are relentlessly agitating against the No Guaranteed NPS and demanding to restore the defined and guaranteed old Pension Scheme. So far 5 state Governments have withdrawn the NPS and restored back the Old Pension Scheme. However the Central Government has warned them that the contribution amount deposited by the States in the Pension Fund will not be given back to the State government.

The Central Government after observing the dissatisfaction and the discontentment amongst the Central Government Employees as an eye wash appointed a high level committee under the Chairmanship of T.V. Somanathan, the Finance Secretary with the terms of Reference to improve the NPS. All the Central Government Employees organizations have rejected this terms of Reference. The committee invited the Standing Committee of National Council – JCM which represents the 30 Lakhs Central Government Employees for a discussion on the 09/06/2023. The Staff Side members in the meeting told the Chairman that the Staff Side reject the terms of reference for improvement in the NPS, since no improvement in the NPS can replace the guaranteed and defined Old Pension Scheme. A written note was also submitted on behalf of the Central Government Employees to the Chairman with the following

justification why NPS should be scrapped and Old Pension Scheme should be restored.

1. The Staff Side of National Council (JCM) right from the day when the Government announced its decision to replace the Old Pension Scheme and to implement the New Contributory Pension Scheme popularly called as NPS, during the year 2003 opposed and rejected the same since Pension of the Government Employees cannot be left to the vagaries of the market. Pension is “deferred wages” for the protection and subsistence during the old age. Moreover the then Government introduced the Contributory Pension Scheme without any consultation with the Trade Unions / Associations of the Central Government Employees including the Staff Side of National Council(JCM).

2. The Staff Side of National Council (JCM) immediately raised the issue in the National Council (JCM) Meetings and we demanded that the Contributory Pension Scheme implemented by the Government should be withdrawn and we put forth many arguments in support of our demand. One of our argument was that the 5th CPC while fixing the pay scales and other benefits has made its recommendations on the basis that Central Government Employees would continue to be governed by the defined and guaranteed Old Pension Scheme under CCS Pension Rules 1972. The wage structure determined by the 5th CPC was on the premise that Pension liability shall be that of the Government and therefore no Contribution for Pension is payable by them. The Staff Side also suggested that the existing defined and guaranteed Pension Scheme under CCS (Pension) Rule 1972 should continue and the contribution scheme introduced by the Government should be an additional Social and Old Age Security option for the employees and be made voluntary in character.

3. After several round of discussions with the Staff Side finally on 14/12/2007, in the Standing Committee meeting of the National Council (JCM) Chaired by the Secretary DOPT the official side gave the following assurance:-

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Contd. from pre. page: Old Pension Scheme

“The Official Side stated that under the NPS, pension system of the employees who entered government service prior to 1.1.2004 is not altered in any way hence, the NPS has no implication for this category of employees. For employees who had entered w.e.f. 1.1.2004 are not likely to be worse off vis-à-vis the current pension system in force, as the replacement rate would match to the present one. Thus, NPS is a win-win situation for employees and the government”

However having not convinced with the assurance given by the Official Side, the Staff Side and the Central Government Employees organizations continued to fight against the No Guaranteed NPS and several representation were submitted to the Government in this regard.

4. The Staff Side while submitting its memorandum and oral evidence before the 7th CPC demanded and advocated for scrapping the NPS on the grounds that it discriminates between two sets of Government Employees, uncertainty regarding the actual value of their future pension in the face of market related risk, the effective salary becomes less since the employees has to mandatorily contribute 10% of their basic pay + DA towards the pension fund, the NPS employees have no recourse to GPF for their savings etc. The 7th CPC after recording all our concerns on NPS recommended to constitute a High Level Committee to review the implementation of NPS.

for those Central Government Employees who were recruited on or after 01/01/2004. The Committees Report was never spared with the Staff Side despite our repeated request. The government subsequently on the plea of implementing the recommendations of the Committee decided to increase its contribution from 10% to 14% w.e.f. 01/04/2019.

6. It is now 20 years after the implementation of NPS. The Experience of almost 20 years has fully demonstrated the truth that the National Pension System implemented by the Government of India unilaterally during the year 2003 for those Central Government Employees recruited on or after 01.01.2004 and subsequently by various State Governments, Autonomous Bodies and Authorities, etc. has deprived Social Security/old age security to the Retiring Employees and has violated the following written assurance given by the Government of India in the Standing Committee meeting of the National Council (JCM) held on 14.12.2007.

7. However the assurance of the Government of India has been clearly violated which is evident from the following table/illustration wherein it is clearly proved that the pension under NPS is not at all matching with the Pension rate under the Old Pension Scheme.

From the above it is now amply clear that the NPS Employees despite their contribution during their entire service period are getting only a very meager pension when compared to the employees governed under old pension scheme.

NPS Employees retired from one of the Defence Ordnance Factory

Name	T.No./Per. No.	Basic Pay	Total Service	NPS Pension	Pension if under Old Pension Scheme
R.Ramachandran	21048/9728	30500	13y/05m/01d	2417/-No DR	15,250/-+DR
K.BhaskarRao	101755	34300	15y/06m/16d	2506/- No DR	17,150/-+DR
S. Sivasankaran	881916	56900	17y/06m/11d	4900/- No DR	28,450/-+DR

5. Accordingly the Government of India Constituted a Committee Under the Chairmanship of Secretary Continue (Pension). The Staff Side appeared before the Committee and made presentation before the Committee with facts & figure and demanded that NPS should be withdrawn and Old Pension Scheme should be restored back. After our presentation before the committee we were given an impression that the committee would recommend for scrapping NPS and to restore OPS

8. Considering all the above serious development and the bitter experience of returns from the NPS, the entire Central Government employees and State Government Employees constituted a Joint Forum of Restoration of Old Pension Scheme (JFROPS) under the banner of NJCA. A National Convention of JFROPS was held at Delhi on the 21st of January 2023 where in a declaration was adopted demanding the following:-

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STATE/SECTOR

Working Committee Meeting of Madhya Pradesh AITUC

District Umariya, Ghunghuti, Madhya Pradesh, 12th May 2023.

The meeting was presided over by Com. Haridwar Singh and Com. Ajit Jain.

Com. S. S. Mourya, General secretary Madhya Pradesh state report of activities of course you see unions in mp since the last meeting held on 26th November 22 after the members paid homage to the Congress In the interviewing. Com. Maurya's report detailed the anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-national direction of the policies followed by the Central as well the state government of MP. He underlined the importance of the decisions of the 42nd national conference of AITUC, held in Kerala from 16th to 20th December 2022, which has the all important slogan of "BJP Hatao, Desh Bachao". He said the task is in 2023 MP State Elections followed by 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

15 Comrade delegates spoke on the report and informed the house that new unions would be registered in 10 places in the state. The report was passed reiterating the action program decided by the Workers Convention held on 30th January in Delhi, including the Mahapadav on 9th August in Bhopal.

The meeting approved new rates of affiliation to the AITUC as well as the state council with effect from 2023. Names of Com. Rudrapal Yadav, Indore and Com. Sanjay Namdev, Singrauli were recommended for the 2 General Council seats. Com. Naveen Kumar (Coal) has been made a member of the State Working Committee, while Com. Arnavdas Gupta of Jabalpur AIDEF has been made a Special invitee.

Com Haridwar Singh gave a detailed report of his visit to Cuba for the International Workingmen's day, the May Day. ■

Casualization of Permanent Public Sector Jobs a dangerous Trend : AITUC

The recently published Public Enterprises Survey Reports for the period from 2012-13 to 2021-22 reveals that in the Central Public Sector Enterprises, Government Corporations and Government subsidiaries which were providing jobs for 17.3 lakhs persons has been reduced to 14.6 lakhs during March 2022.C. Srikumar, National Secretary of AITUC and who is already fighting on behalf of AIDEF for filling up of 2.9 lakh civilian posts lying vacant in the Defence Ministry alone, is critical about the job opportunities going down in Government Departments and Public Sector Undertakings including Public Sector Banks and Insurance Sector. He said that during the year 1994 the sanctioned strength of Central Government Employees was 41.76 lakhs which is today reduced

to 30 Lakhs. More than 11 lakh posts are lying vacant in Central Government Ministries and Departments. In Railways 3.5 Lakhs, in Defence 2.90 Lakhs, in Postal Department 1 Lakh posts are lying vacant. It is not that the work has come down in these departments, rather work has been increased multifold. The deficiencies are being matched by out sourcing, deployment of contract workers and casual and daily wage workers etc. The most dangerous effect of casualization of jobs in the Government Departments and CPSUs is the social justice in the form of reservation in jobs guaranteed in the constitution for the upliftment of the OBCs, SCs and STs will come to an end. Government as an employer should behave as a good model employer to the private sectors and multinational companies of this country. ■

Contd. from pre. page: Old Pension Scheme

(1) To withdraw the National Pension System implemented to the employees who are recruited on or after 01/01/2004 and to bring them all under the coverage of old pension scheme under CCS(Pension) Rules1972.

(2) To implement the GPF scheme to the employees who are recruited on or after 01/01/2004 by depositing

the accumulated employee's contribution along with the returns to the GPF Account of the employees.

In view of all the above justification the Staff Side of the National Council (JCM) is of the firm view that any modification / improvement of the NPS in accordance with the Terms of Reference given to the Committee is not going to be of any help to the NPS employees whose right for a dignified life. ■

Sonbhadra district conference of UP Bijli Karamchari Sangh held

The conference of Uttar Pradesh Bijli Karamchari Sangh, Sonbhadra district was held in grand manner. A massive public meeting was also organised on this occasion addressed among others by Mahendra Rai general secretary and Jawahar Lal Vishavkarma, President, Ajay Kumar Singh Working president of the Union. The delegate session was chaired by Kamla Tiwari and proceedings conducted by Nitesh Maurya. The conference deliberated on the pressing issues of workers and union's response. Those elected included Jyoti Kumar as district president and Abhay Pande as district secretary. ■



SKMS holds its working committee meeting

The working committee of Samyukata Koyla Mazdoor Sangh held its working committee meeting chaired by Ajay Vishwakarma on 13th June in Union office in Ghevra. Haridwar Singh National Vice President AITUC addressed the meeting and apprised them of the continued attacks on working class, weakening the labour rights through regressive codification, sheltering of hate mongers and vigilante groups and undermining Indian constitution. He criticized the Central Government for dishonoring the President of India for not inviting her to the inauguration of new Parliament. While apprising them with the wage agreement arrived at with the management, he emphasized for the unions to come forward to implement the joint program call from the platform of Central Trade Unions. ■



AITUC Union to hold protest on July 6 demanding filling up of vacancies

AITUC-affiliated Tamil Nadu Government Transport Corporation Workers Union has announced that it would stage protests across the state demanding filling up vacant posts of drivers, conductors, technical and office categories through direct recruitment. A resolution to this effect was adopted at the union's executive committee meeting held at Thiruvannamalai on June 20 said the union general secretary R Arumugham. The protests would be held across the state on July 6. The union would hold protests seeking fulfilment of 12 point

charter of demands including payment of seven months' arrears as per the 14th wage settlement agreement and extension of wage agreement benefits to the pensioners. Arumugham demanded that the management should drop its proposal to appoint the drivers on a contract basis and retired drivers and conductors. "There are over 20,000 youngsters who underwent driver training at the Institute of Road Transport. They are registered at the employment exchange in the hope of getting a job. Those qualified should be provided job," he said. ■

Every Female and Male Employee whether appointed on regular basis, contractual basis, adhoc basis, have Fundamental Right to Maternity and Paternity Leave: Himachal Pradesh High Court

The Court said that the object of maternity leave is to protect the dignity of motherhood by providing full and healthy maintenance to the woman and her child and maternity leave is intended to achieve the social justice to women.

Himachal Pradesh High Court: In a Writ Petition filed by the State of Himachal Pradesh ('State-petitioner') against the Order of the Himachal Pradesh Administrative Tribunal ('Tribunal') whereby, the respondent was granted the benefit of deemed maternity leave and thereafter, consequential benefit of conferment of work-charge status on completion of 8 years of service, the Division Bench of Tarlok Singh Chauhan and Virender Singh JJ., dismissed the State's petition and said that maternity leave is a fundamental right of the respondent, which cannot be denied.

In the matter at hand, the Tribunal had passed an Order that the period of maternity leave of the respondent would be deemed to be continuous service in view of the provisions of Section 25(B)(1) of the Industrial Dispute Act. The respondent's application before the Tribunal was allowed and the present petitioner i.e., the State was directed to consider the case of the respondent for conferment of work charge status on completion of 8 years of service within two months. Therefore, aggrieved by the Order of the Tribunal, the State filed the present petition before the Court.

The Court said that India is signatory to various International Covenants and Treaties. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights adopted by the United Nations on 10-12-1948, set in motion the universal thinking that human rights are supreme and ought to be preserved at all costs. Further, the Court considered the 'Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women' (CEDAW) and 'ILO: Maternity Protection Convention 2000' relevant for the present matter. The Court said that after years of deliberations at National and International level, the right of a woman employee for maternity leave was established as supreme with the enactment of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.

Further, the Court stated that every female employee and male employee whether appointed on regular basis, contractual basis, ad hoc basis, tenure/

temporary basis have a fundamental right to reasonable duration of maternity leave as well as paternity leave, Child Care Leave (CCL) to promote motherhood and child-care under Article 21 Constitution of India read with Article 42 of the Constitution.

The Court referred to Municipal Corpn. of Delhi v. Female Workers (Muster Roll), (2000) 3 SCC 224, wherein the Supreme Court held that the provisions of Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 entitled maternity leave even to women engaged on casual basis or on muster roll basis daily wage and not only to those in regular employment. Further, the Court said that the object of maternity leave is to protect the dignity of motherhood by providing full and healthy maintenance to the woman and her child, maternity leave is intended to achieve the social justice to women, motherhood and childhood as both requires special attention.

The Court noted that the respondent in the present case was a daily wage woman employee at the time of advance pregnancy and said that she could not have been compelled to undertake hard labour, as it would have been detrimental not only to her health and safety but also to the health, safety and growth of her child. The Court also said that maternity leave is a fundamental right of the respondent, which could not have been denied by the State. Therefore, the Court said that the action of the State-petitioner was violative of Articles 29 and 39-D of the Constitution.

Thus, the Court dismissed the petition. ■



Contract workmen in Coal Industry Unionized!

Sukumar Damle

30th June 2023, Ghughus, Dist Chandrapur, Maharashtra : Some 50 outsourced workers, all drivers, had gathered in the AITUC Union office at Ghughus on 30th June. They had waited since 10 AM for Com. Shyam Kale and myself to arrive, which we could only at 1:30 PM !

of management and the permanent workmen) has determined Rs. 40000 per month for them. But there is a Contractor in between, who passes on only Rs. 22000! All the workers had joined only from the 1st of June and would be paid only next week.

The immediate problem on hand was a driver,



This is the Coalfield owned by Western Coal Limited, a public sector unit.

Com. Narendra Chandraiya introduced us to the workmen. Com. Shrinivas Goskula gave a background of the earlier attempts made by these workers to unionise with the help of HMS. Unfortunately, the HMS functionaries had withdrawn their support when the workers gave a strike notice! Their working conditions were as expected : sub-human. They were put up in shacks about one km from the coal pit, with no water, no proper mess, were promised Rs. 22000 per month when the High Powered Committee (HPC, a joint body

Ashraf, who had stopped to buy some eatables on his coal movement trip and for that, he was sacked by the Contractor's supervisor only the day before! He had completed the month of June 2023 working, but did not expect to be paid his monthly wages, as many such cases had happened earlier. He was only given Rs. 1000 and asked to clear out. He was on the verge of tears, not knowing what he should do next.

Now they had all become members of General Industries Kamgar Union (GIKU), affiliated to the AITUC. Both Shyam and Damle stressed on the point that becoming members of GIKU alone would not perform any wonders. It was their determined unity that would take them forward. And rocklike backing of the union of the permanent workmen in WCL, Ghughus Coalfield, led by Com. Murlī Chintalwar, who was present in the meeting (Samyukt Khadan Mazdoor Sangh, SKMS, affiliated to AITUC). Com. Damle gave the example of Petroleum Workers Union, which had formed the union of outsourced workers in Indian Oil Corporation in the entire North India, ensuring that the outsourced

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Kerala holds joint convention of Trade Unions

Samyuktha Trade Union state convention was held in grand manner in Eranakulam. The convention has chaled programme of action to be carried out in all the districts of Kerala to Culminate in big mobilisation on 9th August - 'Quit India' day.



Construction unions organise protest at DC office

The Construction unions affiliated to AITUC , CITU, ICTU and INTUC organised a protest demonstration in front of District Collector Office in Fatehabad Haryana. After the protest, they submitted as Samyukt Nirman Mazdoor Morcha memorandum to the officials addressed to the Chief Minister of the state Government of Haryana.

The speakers who addressed the protesters termed Mr Khattar's Government as anti labour, having stopped disbursement of benefits to workers and their families. The pink cards of workers are being canceled and all the promises given have turned out to be rhetoric only.



The Joint delegation handing over their memorandum to the official in DC office

Contd. from pre. page: Contract workmen in Coal

workers did not lose their employment on account of union formation.

The unity of WCL outsourced workers had two immediate tasks to tackle : (1) to go together to the Supervisor who had sacked Ashraf and tell him that no one would drive any vehicle in the night shift, unless Ashraf was taken back on work;

(2) In case the Supervisor refuses to reinstate Ashraf, to keep Ashraf in the camp, to take care of him against the goons of the Contractor and to feed him till the Contractor relents.

The showdown was at 5 PM that day. So the or-

ganisers asked us leave for Nagpur. So the meeting ended and all marched to the Contractor to tell him of their resolve in support of Asraf and they would keep us informed of the outcome of 5 PM.

At 6 PM we called Com. Goskula who said they were at the contractor's and would call back at 7:30 PM.

At 7.30 PM, Goskula called to say Ashraf was taken back the duty; from now on the duty would be 9 hours with one hour rest. This has electrified the outsourced workers to see their own unity in action. The team at Ghughus has assured Shyam that the next meeting would be a much bigger meeting because there were about 24 contractors, each with about 200 outsourced workers! ■

RESPONSE TO A LETTER FROM LOKSABHA SECRETARIAT

To

The Additional Director,
Loksabha Secretariat,
Parliament House Annex,
Room No.7, EPHA, New Delhi.

Ref. : Your letter No.SCOL031(11)/1/2022
dt.13.06.2023

Sir,

1. EPS-95 has been paying Rs. 1000 per month as Minimum Pension since 2014. It is an universal demand to increase it to Rs. 9000/- pm with DA linkage plus provision for medical facilities.

The need and therefore the demand is so urgent, that the BJP candidates had solicited votes in 2014 Loksabha elections on the promise of implementing the Bhagat Singh Koshiyari Committee Report of 2013, within 90 days of being elected. The said Report had recommended Rs. 3000/-pm plus DA. Since then, though the BJP is in power, only the EPS-95 pensioners seem to remember the recommendations of Bhagat Singh Koshiyari Committee.

2. The EPFO and the Labour Ministry have been putting forth the plea to deny this demand that actuarial calculations show that EPS-95 fund will be depleted in no time if any of these demands are conceded. But the actuarial calculations have not been shown even to the CBT members. In fact the EPFO claims that the EPS-95 funds have never been in deficit since inception.

3. Over the years, many benefits under EPS-95 have been curtailed citing the alleged actuarial calculations: **(a)** Revision of pension every year has been stopped; **(b)** Return of capital stopped; **(c)** Factor of reduction of pension, if claimed earlier than 58 years of age, was increased from 3% per year to 4% per year; **(d)** Option for commutation stopped

4. Coverage of establishments under the EPF & Miscellaneous Provisions Act is very poor as inspections have been stopped. In Delhi itself, only 45000 employees are covered, while those who are eligible for coverage number more than 10 lakhs.

5. If EPS-95 is compared to Old Pension Scheme (OPS) or National Pension Scheme, we find that EPS-95 is entirely funded by the PF accumulations of the concerned workman whereas OPS is funded entirely by the central government and NPS is funded jointly by government and the employee.

6. The question of higher pension on higher contribution : the Supreme Court judgment is a boon for the government and the EPFO as it introduces a cut off date (now 26th June 2023) after which no one will be able to apply for higher pension on actual salary. This should be corrected by overruling Supreme Court judgment by parliamentary intervention.

7. The EPFO establishment : The EPFO needs to be overhauled as we find that a lot of money (workers' money paid as administrative charges in EPF Account No. 2) is being squandered away on litigation against the EPFO staff and for flimsy reasons, topmost lawyers are engaged to challenge the Staff instead of having talks with them. Indiscriminate hiring and showering monetary benefits on Cadre A has made the establishment top heavy, with dearth of Cadre C, who actually work.

For example in the matter of NFSG benefit (Non Functional Selection Grade), which is applicable only to the organised Group A services of the government (IAS, IPS etc., Equivalent to Grade Pay 8700 in the pre-revised pay scale), the Group A Officers in EPFO, who are not even gazetted officers, somehow managed to make NFSG benefit applicable to them. Irony is that the Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) report, DoP&T guidelines, clearly stated that it was not applicable to them. Further a committee was constituted by the Ministry of Labour, headed by its Addl. Secretary Ms Anuradha Prasad, IAS, which also gave its opinion that RPF C I in EPFO were not eligible for NFSG benefit and yet they have managed to get the abovesaid benefit along with arrears, thereby plundering Crores of rupees from EPFO. This needs to be inquired by the appropriate agency like CBI.

Similarly, the Officers are misusing their administrative powers and spending in lakhs for renovation of their chambers/ Quarters every year, engaging luxury cars for transport (monthly rent of around Rs.1 lakh) beyond their eligibility, though there is an office car available. Many Officers are staying in Guest House/Transit rooms for years and unlawfully getting the monthly HRA, thereby putting the EPFO to unnecessary expenses.

A Committee should be formed in this regard to inquire how much has been spent in the above said matter.

INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, SEWA, AICCTU, LPF, UTUC. ■

FURTHER RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

To
The Additional Director,
Loksabha Secretariat, Parliament House Annex,
Room No.7, EPHA, New Delhi.
Ref. : Your letter No.SC0L031(11)/1/2022
dt.13.06.2023

Sir,

These are further suggestions in response to your above referred letter from the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions. We have already submitted our suggestions by an email on 23.06.2023.

1. The Building and Other Construction Workers States Boards has large unspent CESS amount in the board to be utilized for the welfare and social security of the construction workers. It is suggested that these funds can be linked with the EPFO as a contribution of employers as well as the construction workers.

2. Extending the Provident fund to the self-employed workers of the unorganised sector wherein the worker can give their contribution and the employer contribution can be collected from the CESS/ tax coming from the relevant industry. Like the textile and garment workers can be included from the garment industry, the ship breaking industry can contribute for the downstream

industry, the agricultural workers can have employers' contribution from this industry's tax/ CESS.

3. Government should allocate budget to ensure pension of Rs. 6,000/- per month for the workers of the unorganized sector. This scheme should be formed under the EPFO pension scheme.

4. Following modifications are suggested under The Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan Yojana (PMSYM) of GOI in perspective of the unorganized sector :

- Presently this scheme does not allow workers above the age of 40 to start contributing in it. An unorganized sector worker is economically active till she dies, as she is a daily wager and she has to do work to survive

- Thus, the applicability age of the worker should be increased till the worker is economically active.

- The scheme states that in case of death of the husband/ wife the beneficiary is only the spouse, children of the family are not included especially the minor. This should be changed and in case of death of both husband and wife the beneficiary should be the child especially in case of minor children.

INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, SEWA, AICCTU, LPF, UTUC. ■



Mid Day meal workers demonstration

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra: Part of Mid-day Meal Workers state level demonstration on 19th June for increase in their honorarium. It was increased to Rs 5000/- pm. Com. Shyam Kale informs that this has led to many erstwhile workers being removed from their posts and School Administrators filling the resulting vacancies with their nominees! The Union has to fight this menace also. ■

Bokaro Ispat Kamgar Union fights for Contract workers

The Contract workers of Bokaro steel plant took out procession in the city and then held public meeting near Union office to press upon the demands of reinstatement of the Contract workers, equal pay for equal work, guaranteed minimum wages and end to harrasment in gate entry etc. The procession was organised in the leadership of Ramashray Prasad Singh alongwith leaders of Contract workers. Those who addressed the gathering warned the management that the agitation would be intensified if the justice is not done to the workers. ■



AITUC must play significant role in making CTUs programmes a success : Amarjeet Kaur

“Mahapadav (Maha dharna) will be organized on 9 th August in all states under the auspices of central trade unions protesting against anti worker, anti farmers and anti people’s policies of BJP government headed



by Modi” stated by Amarjeet Kaur, national general secretary, AITUC on 14th June at Satyanarayana Reddy Bhavan, Telangana state headquarters of AITUC, Hyderabad.. She also has further stated that on the day of “Quit India”, maha dharnas will be organized all over the country with a slogan of “Save Nation-Save People”. After 15th August a joint meeting of central

trade unions and agricultural workers unions will be held and program of action will be evolved on issues pertaining to agricultural labor and in the month of December united movement will be launched in grand scale in national level.

Amarjeet Kaur further declared that central trade unions also will take part in programs of farmers unions which will be held on 26, 27, 28th November. In the month of August future program of action will be decided in joint meeting. In December agitations, will be held throughout the country.

S Balraj, State General Secretary, AITUC, assured that district level conventions will be organized as preparation of mahapadav. Press-Meet was attended by Vidya Sagar Giri, national vice president, Chandraiah B, state vice president, M Narsimha state Deputy General Secretary, Karuna Nanduri, and B Venkatesh, state secretaries, Boddupalli Kushan, council member, AITUC were also present among others. ■

Workers Solidarity Meeting with Maruti Workers – Foundation day celebrations



NPS adoption by Central Public Sector Enterprises declines in APRIL

Adoption of the National Pension System (NPS) by employees of central government and central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) declined marginally to 17,459 in April from 18,946 in March, showed latest data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Friday. Of the new subscribers joining NPS in April under the central government and CPSEs, the share of women subscribers increased marginally to 21.9 per cent from 21.2 per cent in March. Since the centre has mandated NPS for new employees, analysts believe the monthly subscription figure can be considered a proxy of new employment generation by the Centre and CPSEs.

Similarly, the share of young subscribers (18-28 years) increased to nearly 74 per cent in April from 68 per cent in the preceding month.

The NPS data showed the new subscribers under the state governments fell by 42 per cent to 38,909 in April from 66,640 in March. Earlier, a few opposition-ruled states, including Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Punjab, had announced a return to the old pension scheme (OPS), thereby abandoning NPS. Hence, it cannot be used as an exact metric to gauge hirings at state level. ■

INTERNATIONAL

Ten thousand in the square in Rome for the first national demonstration against Meloni and her warmongering government

Ten thousand people from all over Italy took to the streets of Rome today for the first national demonstration against the Meloni government. Together with the militants of the Unione Sindacale di Base, exponents of over a hundred committees, associations and organisations marched from Piazza della Repubblica to San Giovanni, where the final rallies were held.

The unitary banner 'The Meloni government steals our future: lower the guns, raise the wages' summarised the rally's watchwords, namely the fight against the anti-grassroots policies of a warmongering government that goes against workers and their rights. The most right-wing executive in recent Italian history does not move a finger to stop the loss of purchasing power of wages and the worsening of living conditions, far from it: it eliminates the citizenship income, extends the use of precarious contracts, manages the housing



emergency by force, further cuts funds to a health system in coma, and treats the issue of migrant workers as a public order problem. In return, it eases the tax burden for the rich and the bosses and sticks everyone else.

This government will always find USB in her way, until her downfall. ■

Solidarity with California Hotel Workers

15,000 Hotel workers in Los Angeles, California who have decided to go on strike on July 4 if the employers do not accept the signing of a Collective Agreement with wage increases.

The hotel workers are demanding an immediate wage increase of \$5 an hour to keep pace with skyrocketing housing costs, health care, a pension that

International Airport, to which authorities responded with 200 arrests of workers and unionists.

Among those arrested was WFTU Presidential Council member, Business Manager of the Los Angeles Roofers Local 36, Cliff Smith, who said

"Proud to be arrested supporting UNITEHERE11 hotel workers fight for a better contract! An injury to one is an injury to all!"



will allow workers to retire safely and secure humane working conditions.

As part of their actions, workers, with the support of unions and organizations in the region, held on June 22 a sit-in civil disobedience protest near Los Angeles

PAME denounced the repression and the arrests of workers and trade unionists who are fighting for their basic rights. Against repression and intimidations.

AITUC sends its solidarity to the struggling workers for their just rights and condemns repression.

Colleagues in California hotels, in your struggle you are not alone!■

WFTU Statement on the new attack in Palestine

19 Jun 2023: The Israeli occupation crimes continue, today the Israeli occupation forces raided once again Jenin camp leaving destruction and horror among the residents of the camp.

During the raid the occupation forces used weapons and grenades, even bombarded houses using a helicopter, which resulted in the death of four Palestinian young men as well as a 15-year child, the Israeli also obstructed the first responders and ambulances that were trying to transfer and treat the injured according to the Palestinian red crescent. Also, reports were made about the occupation forces targeting journalists.

The World Federation of Trade Unions strongly condemns the crimes against humanity represented by the policies of the Israeli occupation, the continuous massacres and ethnic cleansing, the apartheid regime, land theft, the establishment of settlements and the arrest of Palestinians on charges of defending their land.

WFTU will continue to fight alongside the Palestinian, against imperialism, colonialism, occupation and apartheid. We have a common struggle and we will fight tirelessly so that every worker around the world has the full right to live in freedom and dignity. ■

Germany: New strike of workers in the multinational Amazon

27 Jun 2023: The World Federation of Trade Unions, the most historic international trade union organization representing more than 105 million workers who work, live, and struggle in 133 countries of the 5 continents, expresses its internationalist solidarity with the new strike of workers in the multinational Amazon.

The workers of Amazon's warehouses in Leipzig, Germany are on 2-days strike, demanding a collective labour agreement and wage increase for both regular workers and apprentices. The international class-oriented trade union movement joins its voice with

the struggling workers and supports their just demand for dignified wages, and agreement-regulated work, as well as the labor agreement to be binding for the company.

This new Amazon workers' struggle is added to the list of the recent strikes of workers in Amazon in other warehouses in the USA, underlying the huge wave of struggles all over the globe against the unacceptable low salaries and miserable working conditions prevailing in multinational companies that earn countless profits from the workers' sweat and blood. ■

Contd. from last page: AIWWF-AITUC

The Seventh Central Pay Commission report was accepted by the Central government in 2016, and the Centre had said that the recommendation would apply to 33 lakh central government employees. The number of central government employees were estimated to only 8.5 per cent of the organised workforce of the country providing quality decent jobs with social security provision. It means within six years by 2021, central government shed about 3 lakh jobs.

All these show the huge gender gap in the central government and CPSE jobs, where women's share in employment is less even less than 10 per cent. However, in the entire labour market the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for women in urban areas in Current Weekly Status (CWS) was 18 per cent in the last quarter of 2022-23 that ended on March 31, 2023.

Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for women was just 16.4 per cent. It is against LFPR of 47 per cent globally. LFPR as per PLFS for July 2021 – June 2022 was 27.2 per cent and WPR at 25.6 per cent.

Female labour force participation has been declining since 1999-2000 in India, when it was 34.1 per cent which came down to 27.2 per cent in 2011-12, and worsened to 18 per cent in during January – March 2023.

These show that the promises made by the PM Modi and his party for women empowerment and increasing their share in employment are just hollow. Majority of women workforce are in low quality private jobs. If the Centre can't give women their share in central government and CPSEs jobs, how can it expect the labour market to increase women's LFPR? (IRL-IPA)■

AIWWF-AITUC

Women's share in Central Government Jobs declining fast Central Public Sector Employs only a little over 9 Per Cent Women

Dr. Gyan Pathak

Despite big promises to women in BJP's 2019 manifesto, including to formulate a comprehensive 'Women in the Workforce' road map focused on dramatically increasing female workforce participation rate over the next five years, the women's share in Central Government jobs have been declining with the general decline in total job opportunities. Women's participation has substantially gone down in single digit in central government and CPSE jobs.

Centre has not been providing latest data on women employed in central government jobs is therefore understandable. The latest Census of Central Government Employees was brought out in April 2014 for the year ending March 31, 2011. Narendra Modi, as prime ministerial candidate had been promising 'jobs with dignity for all' which meant 2 crore jobs every year, but after he became prime minister of the country, even central government jobs started declining.

About 30.87 lakh employees were there in 2011 in the Central government, as per the Census of Central Government Employees, said the Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Employment in the year 2020 in Rajya Sabha, out of that as low as 10.93 per cent were women. It showed how the government was afraid of providing the latest number.

Just before general election 2019, Modi government had tabled interim budget 2019-20 in which it said that the estimated number for central government employees was over 36.15 lakh as on March 1, 2019, and showed a 12 per cent increase over March, 2017. Then the BJP came with a manifesto to formulate roadmap to increase women employees in government.

However, the total number of employees had declined as of March 1, 2022 to 31.69 lakh as per the budget papers of 2023-24 under heading "Estimated Strength of Establishment and Provisions". It has however estimated that central government employment was expected to rise over 34.45 lakh as of March 1, 2023 and then to 35.55 lakh as of March, 2024.

Between the general election of 2019 and 2024, central government employees would be declining by at least 60,000. Share of women in central government would also decline with it even at faster rate.

It would be despite the fact that there were 40.35 lakh sanctioned posts but only 30.55 lakhs persons were in position as on March 1, 2021, according to Expenditure Department's Annual Report on Pay & Allowanced of Central Government Civilian Employees. Over 9.79 lakhs posts were vacant, implying one in every 4 posts were vacant. Now when elections are coming to close, PM Modi has been distributing jobs in employment fairs, to appear to be concerned for increasing employment, just contrary to the real employment situation in the central government.

Employment fairs are being held across the country, and the new appointees are being not only inducted into the central ministries, departments, autonomous bodies, but also in Central Public Sector Undertakings. The target announced is that the government intends to provide 10 lakh jobs over a year. It means that all the new appointments are not being done for the central government where the vacancies were 9.79 lakhs.

Many of the appointees are being sent to CPSEs, but employment in CPSEs have also been declining in the last decade. On March 31, 2013, there were 17.3 lakh employees in CPSEs, but on March 31, 2022, only 14.6 lakhs employees were there. It means, 2.7 lakh employments were just vanished. The quality of employment has also substantially declined in the meantime. The share of casual and contract workers has more than doubled and rose from 19 per cent in 2013 to 42.5 per cent in 2022. In the meantime, the number of casual and daily workers rose from 40,000 to 1 lakh, and contract workers from 2.9 lakh to 5.2 lakhs.

Women's employment position is far worse. In 2021-22, women constituted 9.1 per cent of total employees in CPSEs. The number decreased to 76,678 in 2021-22 from 80,525 in 2020-21.

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