

Organ of Federation of Medical And Sales Representatives' Associations of India

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Year-long Diamond Jubilee Celebration ends with GCM in KMSRA



State General Council meeting of KMSRA was held at Com. D.P. Dubey Nagar (Raiban Auditorium), Alleppey on 14-15 October 2017. The General Council meeting was inaugurated by CITU's state President, Anathalavattom Anandan. Greeting the members, he highlighted the present situation including the policy level attack by the central government on the workers and the toiling people of the country and their attempt to divide the restive working class. He highlighted the attack on the democratic force by the fundamental and communal agents patronized by the main ruling party at the centre. He also explained the backdrop of the Maha Padav at Delhi, at the call of joint trade union movement of the country and called upon the members of

KMSRA to make it a grand success. Apart from the General Secretary and Treasurer's report presented by Mohan C Nair and Kurian George respectively, two notes on organization and council and council related movements were presented by the Joint General Secretaries, M.M. Haneefa, and P. Krishnanand. 23 comrades participated in the discussion on the General Secretary's and Treasurer's report and 9 comrades from the commissions on organizations and on councils presented the commission's views.

R. Viswanathan, President, FMRAI greeted the members and in his deliberation elaborated various aspects of the organization and its movements. He also called upon the members to make the Mumbai Rally

on 13th November, demanding of the employers the compliance of the existing law of the land and to stop victimisation on sales ground, a historic one. Of the 246 eligible members, 202 attended the meeting. Both the reports were adopted unanimously.

On 15th, a special session was held on the conclusion of Diamond Jubilee celebration of KMSRA. It was reiterated that, since its inception, in 1957, the organisation was known as KMRA and later changed its name to KMSRA. In 1967, KMSRA was registered as a trade union and started functioning with three sub-units across the state. At present, till the diamond jubilee celebration, KMSRA has a strong presence in 14 districts with a membership of 9500.

As a pre Diamond Jubilee
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such presence will allow enriching knowledge, share experiences, and help comparing economic and social situations. The misery and suffering of the world, remains the fact that every day, 10 000 people on this planet die of hunger, 30000 are victims of wars but it is 100,000 who dies because of lack of access to health care, vaccination, drug or lack of research. Two billion human beings do not have access to care, two other billions have access only partially, while at the same time the profits made by the companies of health industry are in the hundreds of billions of dollars each year. This, itself is a crime against humanity though the Health industries save, thousands, millions of lives every day.

WFTU General Secretary George Mavrikos highlighted the exploitation of the poorer sections of the people in the present capitalist system. He reminded the WFTU's call of 2013 for ensuring access to medicines to all sections of people in the world. As per ILO data there are 21 million workers associated with the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industry. He urged upon the trade unions to consolidate these workers in their respective countries. WFTU

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Flash strike in Wallace against new offensive



The Wallace management has unleashed fresh attack on the field workers. On 9th October, 2017, the vice-president HR had shot a letter addressed to All India Convener, accused FMRAI, blamed the field workers, used language of senseless intolerance, revealed their nervousness in the face of agitation, exposed their authoritarian mindset and claimed that the bilateralism that existed for Three and a half decade cease to exist and stated that 'management hereby withdraws recognition of FMRAI. Thus, Wallace management pretended that they have vanished FMRAI through some quick display of their magic spell. Obviously, the union, FMRAI, does not vanish with any amount of magic spell or any amount of communication skill, which are both deceitful and untrue. Recognition of FMRAI is not based on mercy of any individual management; neither trade union right is accomplished through petition alone, as contemplated by Wallace management. The recognition of FMRAI is based on law and on the very exclusivity of support

of the field workers. FMRAI has squarely rejected the contention of the letter. Through another letter, dated 10th October, 2017, management sent notice of show cause and suspension, with immediate effect, to Joint All India convener. In the meantime, Zonal Convener (East), Conveners, Joint Conveners and members received show cause notices across the country (numbering 39 till the end of October). All the show cause notices and the suspension of Joint All India convener were on flimsy ground, with fabricated, false and deceitful charges. Management sent letter claiming de-recognition with a view to deny existence of union only when they felt the existence of union more prominently. The clear intention of the management is to terrorize the field workers and for delinking the field workers from FMRAI. Supposed de-recognition, show cause notices and suspension are the part of confrontationist aspirations of the management, which was belied by united response and befitting reply by the awakened field workers of

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Intensify the surging struggles

Join massive Dharna before Parliament

A.K. Padmanabhan, Vice President, CITU

Working people in India have sounded the bugle again for countrywide struggles including strike actions against the anti-people policies of the Modi Government. After this Govt took over in 2014, there have been two country wide strikes in 2015 and 2016. In addition to these, there have been strikes and struggles in various parts of the country involving almost all sectors. These strikes included many countrywide sectoral strikes.

Modi Government and the Prime Minister himself started his rhetorical campaign with "Shrameva Jayate", trying to camouflage the Govt's pro-corporate policies. This sloganeering has got exposed without much delay, with the Government unleashing a war

against working people by amending Labour Laws and also other steps in the name of ease of doing business. The last 40 months have seen severe attacks on almost all the hard won rights of the working people.

National Convention : It is in such a background, the Central Trade Unions and independent national federations, called a national convention on 8th August, at Delhi. Of course, there was one exception in the list of Central TUs. That was of BMS, which has been staying away from the joint actions after BJP came into power. Huge mobilisation of delegates from all the states, literally from Kashmir to

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International Conference on health industry in France



The international conference was organized by WFTU-FNIC (World Federation of Trade Unions and the Federation of Workers in the Chemical Industry) from 25 to 27 October, 2017 in the sprawling CGT premises in

Montrouille locality of Paris, France. In his welcome deliberation Manu Blanco greeted the foreign delegations, organization of the CGT related directly or indirectly to the health industries. He mentioned that

An Exercise of Deception & Fraud

Tapen Sen, General Secretary, CITU

(Continued from October, 2017 issue of FMRAI News)

Conclusion : What Should be the Alternative to this Design of Loot and Plunder?

The main intent of putting in place a single social security project for workers in both the organised and unorganised sectors, having widely divergent working conditions and earning levels, is only to ensure much speedier transfer of resources from millions of working people to handful corporate blood-suckers. If the government is really sincere in providing social security to all workers, to make it really universal, it should frame two sets of strategies.

Strengthen and Widen the Coverage of EPF and ESI

The scope of the existing functional schemes like EPF and ESI should be widened further, doing away with the threshold level of employment from existing 20 and 10. It should ensure that whoever is employed in lieu of wages, irrespective of level of employment should be brought under EPF and ESI schemes. Even at present level of stipulated threshold of 20, the EPF subscribership of around 4 crore can just be doubled in the least. The enforcement machinery is at present forced into inaction to severely water down inspection on the plea of portal based randomised inspection. This is nothing but a biggest fraud on the very concept of inspection. If threshold restriction is done away with, EPF coverage can be widened at least five times from the present level. Similarly, in respect of ESI scheme also, the fraudulent inspection and enforcement process has kept the number of ESI subscribers even below the EPF despite the fact that the threshold level of employment for coverage of ESI is 10. If enforcement machinery is liberated from the shackles of employer-government nexus, the ESI subscribership will straightway increase to at least three times the present level of 3 crore. If threshold level restriction is done away with, ESI beneficiaries will also increase by at least five times. EPF and ESI basically cater to almost the same constituency of workforce. Organised sector employment is featured by widespread contractorisation, casualisation of workforce and rampant outsourcing of even core operational activities. Through appropriate legislative changes, principal employers must be made responsible for ensuring coverage of all contract and casual workers including the workers of the outsourcing agents under EPF and ESI and similar social security measures including Maternity Benefit Act. Every off-loading of jobs to contractors must be made through licensed contractors only. Licensing should be made compulsory for all contractor agencies irrespective of their level of employment. The Licensing Authority should also be empowered to have the wherewithal to force implementation of all labour laws including social security legislation while awarding license along with a provision of filing compulsory annual returns on such implementation. The Rajasthan state government's amendment of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act to allow contractors employing up to 50 to go without license and similar legislations at the state level must be scrapped.

For A Comprehensive Social Security for the Unorganised Sector

Workers
In order to devise an effective all embracing social security scheme for the unorganised sector workers, the extremely fragile character of their employment relations must be taken into consideration. Often, the employers in the unorganised sector cannot be clearly recognised; identity of the workers many times overlaps with that of the self employed. While around 46.6% of workforce is self-employed, more than ninety-five per cent of them are actually workers in proxy, serving the medium and large scale industries and establishments. Occupation specific mechanism should be evolved for them in order to get them enrolled in the social security schemes. For example, the welfare scheme for the building and other construction workers permits the involvement of trade unions to identify the construction workers for enrolment in the scheme. Secondly, infrastructure for enforcement and implementation of the already existing social security schemes for Beedi Workers, Mines workers, and construction workers etc-all with dedicated funding arrangement must be widened and strengthened. It is clear from the existing data that the collection of cess as per the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Fund Act has lot of loopholes including corrupt practices allowing large number of construction projects to evade cess payment. On the other hand, most of the state governments have been neglecting enrolment of all the entitled construction workers under the scheme. Around 75% of the construction workers have not yet been enrolled in the state level welfare boards. Again the Labour Ministry's recent decision to discontinue enrolling the MNREGA workers in the Construction Workers' Welfare Scheme is a most retrograde move which must be revoked. The government should also make appropriate contribution to the fund on account of the MNREGA workers to be covered under the Construction Workers Welfare Scheme. Plugging all the deficits and loopholes in the existing occupation specific welfare cum social security schemes, which have been achieved through long struggle, is possible provided there is political will on the part of the central and state governments. Thirdly, social security for unorganised sector workers cannot be managed only with workers' contribution. It cannot even take off without government funding for the simple reason that in majority of cases it will difficult, rather impossible, to identify the employers. Government funding can come either directly or through imposition of cess on the big corporate/ business entities. It is justified since there are big business establishments in the country, which are no less benefited both directly and indirectly by the contribution of unorganised sector workers in the national economy. If only one per cent cess on the construction projects can provide for multi-benefit social security to the construction workers, a general cess on all business establishments can be a good source of funds for funding the social security requirement of the unorganised sector workers. The benefits should include pension, gratuity, medical care, housing-assistance and education-assistance for workers children etc. For making the enrolment effective, a nominal contribution can also be collected from

Do not cut people's lifeline to collect revenue

The Goods and Services Tax was rolled out from July 1, 2017. Now, the finance minister, Arun Jaitley, in his recent address at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN) in Faridabad, admitted that the GST rates are complex and therefore, he promised 'simplification'. Further to this, he professed on the importance of taxes (like GST) and revenue. 'Revenue has a great importance in society...it is the lifeline of governments' said he. (The Business Line, October 1, 2017).

But what he did not explicitly tell to the people of this country that the indirect taxes (like GST), which are levied on everyday consumption items like rice, bread, salt, milk, petrol, diesel, coal, electricity or medicine are not the only source of revenue. The poor and the poorest of the poor pay this indirect tax and there is no tax evasion in such taxes. A beggar or a burglar pays GST at the same rate of 18% when he eats a biscuit. When someone pays Rs 70 for one litre of petrol he pays Rs. 40 (approximately) against indirect tax (here, VAT and excise duty, not GST). These are indirect taxes: unavoidable, inevitable and cannot be slipped through. These indirect taxes are a kind of 'survival taxes' which are levied on every surviving human being in India.

Direct taxes are levied on rich citizens, the industrialists and the big corporations. Direct taxes should be biggest source of revenue of the government. In sensible economy indirect taxes contributes lesser in revenue earning, while biggest share come from direct taxes. This also acts as a buffer against ever-expanding inequality. It is more relevant in society (like in India) where inequality is unpleasantly gigantic, not only through economic route but also by virtue of caste, creed and custom.

But, unfortunately, the share of revenue collection from indirect taxes, in India, is far greater than the revenue earning from direct taxes. All recent data shows that through the plundering of common people, government's revenue earning from indirect taxes is increasing at a much faster rate and pace. (Live mint. April 4, 2017, the Hindu, April 29, 2016)

But, we are taken aback at the nationalist lecture of the finance minister, here, immediately, in the context of revenue earning. We strongly believe that 'lifeline' of the government (as mentioned by our Minister) should not be maintained by hacking the 'lifeline' of the people. The ailing people of this country pay hefty price for their life. No wise variety of nationalism can defend such predatory taxation on the ailing people. It is an appalling situation where enormous taxes are imposed on healthcare and medicine.

Our honourable finance minister might have gone through the advice of the UN Human Rights Council (Thirty-fifth session, 6-23 June, 2017) that reiterates that the national government 'should take, at the national level, all measures necessary for the realization of the right to development and should ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, such as health-care services' and recommends, 'equitable and universal access to health-care services and social protection'.

The draft health policy talked about 'universal access to health-care services' but was finally dropped in the final policy document (National Health Policy, 2017). All sensible governments in the civilized world consider health care as government responsibility. This governmental responsibility (universal health-care access) is honestly admitted in every society across the globe. Here in India such responsibility has not yet been honestly confessed by any government, either previous or the present. In India things are oddly different and awfully different. People pay for healthcare and medicine from their own pocket. Government plays no role and sometimes, plays the role of an irresponsible onlooker. The successive governments in this country have sometimes taken decisions to please the lobbyists of the pharmaceutical industry and helped them, clandestinely, in reckless profiteering. During frequent outbreak of epidemics like dengue, malaria, encephalitis and other national health care crises these pharmaceutical companies (and private healthcare industry) loot the people and government earns huge revenue ('lifeline') silently from people's misery and distress.

The high rate of excise duty that was being levied on essential medicines yesterday has now, by been replaced with high rate of GST on medicines. The ailing people of the country are exposed to such rapacious taxes that no common sense can approve of. The policy of collecting revenue from a dying man is cruelty of extraordinary proportion.

In India medicine cost constitutes a large part in healthcare cost. Following dilution of price control medicine prices have already soared and it is already quite high and increasing leaps and bound. Be it acute care, be it chronic care, medicine prices are torturous burden on the common people, especially, the unemployed, the poor, the old citizens, the women and the children.

But unashamed government imposes senseless taxes on them. Who are most vulnerable to diseases owing to their poverty are made to

drown in further darkness with unbearable taxing. GST is extracted at the rate of 12% on most of the medicines, while it is 5% on few other medicines with no virtual exemption. Stents are put in 5% slab. By the grace of the present rulers human blood is exempted. Contraceptives too are exempted, not from health perspective but from population control perspective.

Recently (October, 2017), GST council has reduced GST rate on unbranded homeopathic, Unani and Ayurvedic medicines from 12% to 5%. The GST rate on manmade thread (yarn) of various descriptions has been reduced from 18% to 12%. But the modern (allopathic) medicines, the essential gear of scientific treatment, are left out either from the list of revision or from the list of exemption.

Incessant attacks on the life and livelihood of the common people, declining health and medicine access situation in the country, heavy burden of diseases, combined with the huge burden of tax and price on the people bringing shame to this large democracy. The attack on the people has reached to the point of brutality. But the ruling party masks all barbarism under their veil of their colourful lecture.

Through huge lectures, the prominent ministers of this government, including the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, claims that they are the true friends of the people. But, there is much cry and little wool. In action they do just the opposite. Their actions and decisions of the government little complement their speeches. They talk marvelously about reduction of medicine prices but impose huge tax (GST). They sufficiently increase medicine price and substantially plunder the common people. Their thunderous roar against corrupt businesses ends up in whimper. They encourage dishonest pricing by allowing arbitrary 'market based pricing' and wittingly and consciously they overlook rampant bribing in the pharmaceutical industry.

The ailing people of the country have a devil of a time with this predatory tax regime on medicine. FMRAI demands of abrogation of all taxes on medicines. FMRAI demands: 'Zero GST on all medicines and medical devices'. This flagship demand of FMRAI has been vociferously voiced in both the meeting, held in April and August this year, organized by NPPA under the custody of the present government. Now, GST council should immediately decide and exempt all medicines from GST and unremitting exploitation of the masses during the worst time of their distress should come to an end, forthwith.

Training Class by TMSRU

TMSRU organized a training class of the union functionaries on 14th October, 2017 at Hyderabad. 31 state level leadership and council leadership at all level attended the programme. The subjects of the class were "Scientific Thinking" and "Exploitation". Indra Reddy and Abbass from CITU spoke on the subjects separately. P Murali was the Principal of the class.

Obituary



Pratik Mukherjee (25), a field worker of Himalaya Drugs and a member of Howrah district of WBMSRU met a road accident while riding a bike and succumbed to death on 2nd October, 2017. Pratik was the only son of his parents. He left behind his bereaved parents for whom we have no word of consolation. FMRAI deeply mourns his untimely death.

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Code on Social Security

the unorganised sector workers. Such nominal contribution can also generate substantial fund, if the governments, both at the centre and in the states, make serious efforts to enforce at least the statutory minimum wage including variable DA for the unorganised sector workers in all the states. This scheme including funding arrangement should be enforced and implemented through a centrally monitored Authority with its dedicated infrastructure network both for enforcement of coverage, funding and also delivery of benefits with its offices and wings spread in all the states at least up to district level. United Struggle to Resist as well as to Achieve the Alternative The working class movement must unitedly expose the hollowness and the deceptive character of the proposed Code on Social Security and its disastrous impact on the working people. The united movement should also expose the nasty conspiracy of the government at the centre to hijack the huge funds of the existing functional social security schemes, belonging to the workers from the existing supervision by the respective tripartite committees for serving the speculative

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Dharna before Parliament

Kanyakumari, covering all the sectors reflected the anger amongst the working people against the policies of the Government. Actually many of them had converged in the huge Talkatora stadium, in the midst of struggles they have been conducting. The public sector workers fighting against privatisation, Central Government employees continuing their struggles on their demands of implementing Government's assurances related to pay commission, State Government employees on struggle for wage revision and also against National Pension Scheme, Defence Production workers struggling against privatisation, Bank Officers and employees preparing for another strike against destructive reforms, Telecom employees on struggles against privatisation and also against denial of wage revision, Insurance employees fighting against disinvestment, Medical and Sales representatives struggling for people oriented drug policy, Scheme workers on continuous struggle for getting the status of workers and related benefits, private sector workers in struggle in various parts of the country struggling against denial of Trade Union rights, Various sections of informal workers raising demands of minimum wages and social security and above all contract, casual and outsourced workers from various sectors including Central and State Government departments - All were there to raise their voice of protest.

The declaration adopted in the convention dealt with the situation among all sections of working people in the country. Noting the unprecedented unity among the peasantry in the country and the militant struggles going on in various states, the convention extended 'full solidarity to the fighting farmers'. The declaration noted that it is the same set of pro-corporate, pro landlord policies which have created a severe crisis in Agriculture, leading to continuing increase in spate of suicides. The convention called upon all sections of working people to united struggle against the anti-people policies of the Government. The declaration noted that 'the task before the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions and independent National Federations is to further intensify the surging struggles in various sectors through concerted united agitation and mobilisation at national level, to be followed by country wide general strike action a culmination and consolidation of all sectoral struggles.'

Charter of demands :The convention reiterated the 12 point

trade in the stock market. We should also project the alternative enumerated above in our campaign. We have to drive home the fact that it is possible to establish comprehensive social security net for the unorganised sector workers with widest coverage; it is possible to widen and strengthen the existing social security schemes for the organised sector workers by completely enrolling the contract, temporary workers and workers of the outsource-agencies within their coverage; and it is also possible to improve and enhance the benefits substantially. These are all possible provided the government has the political will. Fund and resources can never be a problem at all. What is necessary to compel the government to take such measures is united struggle against the neoliberal policy regime and the politics that support these policies. That is the need of the hour. Because, the proposed Code on Social Security is the expression, in its worst form, of the neoliberal policies. To ensure a decisive retreat of this neoliberalism, resistance must be built up at the doorstep of all organised sector establishments with simultaneous militant mobilisations of workers of both the sectors throughout the country. That is how we can overcome. And we will overcome.

terminated had to wait till 1978, when congress was defeated in 1977 elections, to get reinstatement. Trade Union Movement in India, can never forget such large scale killings and victimisations just for a day's strike. That too, when the one day strike was for a demand which the government had agreed to, in the highest tripartite body. The fact that the Government had not yet accepted this principle exposes governments at the centre, though led by various parties and fronts. Central govt employees are even now on struggle on this demand of minimum wages and in March, 2017 had conducted a day's countrywide strike. Exploitation through contract, casual and out sourcing systems are continuing. Lakhs of workers in sections like GraminDakSewa, Scheme workers like Anganwadi, Asha, Midday meal workers continue to suffer under govt. of India, without even getting the status of workers. This experience shows that the struggle should be more inclusive of all those who are affected by the policies of the Government and the struggle has to be developed in to a struggle against the policies of the ruling classes.

Next Phase : It is with this in mind, the convention has called for campaigns and conventions from the local, regional and state level and for massive mobilisation at Central level. Three days mass Dhama on 9th, 10th and 11th of November in New Delhi will witness massive mobilisation from all over the country. The convention has also called upon the working people to prepare for indefinite, countrywide strike action against anti-people, anti national activities of the Government. Against disruptive forces : Need of the hour is total unity of the working people. The convention has noted the danger of disruptive forces active in the country. The convention 'recorded its strong denunciation against communal and divisive machinations on the society being carried on with the active patronage of the government machinery under the present polity and called upon the working class 'to raise their strong voice of protest.' While these campaigns will be jointly undertaken, various organisations will also concurrently conduct independent campaigns to prepare their own ranks and also others for the joint struggle. All out efforts are required to reach out to all sections of working people. With the government and all their supporters including the corporate and government led media on their side, the efforts of the unions and its floor level cadres have to be strengthened in whatever ways possible to meet all the challenges. The days ahead are those of massive, militant struggles, and every one has to be prepared to take up the tasks.

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France

celebrates foundation day on 3rd October every year with a specific theme. Next year it will be Universal Health Care, that is assurance of health care for all people. Eminent Trade union leaders and specialist from SECAFI and CIDECOS presented four separate theme papers for debate and conclusion. The first theme paper was on pharmaceutical industry along with diagnostics, imaging and targeted medication (new therapy individually targeted by DNA mapping) highlighting the growth, profitability of the shareholders amassed from exploitation of the people, high prices and corruption. Second was restructuring of industry in France and in the world with emphasis on tools used in production that highlighted the plight of the workers. Third was the role of healthcare industry from research to care including vaccination programmes, lack healthcare professionals and infrastructure. The session also discussed on the online availability of medicines leading to misuse. Finally on the concluding day the last theme was 'Our union's proposals for health industries at the service of Humanity'. From the discussion on this theme it emerged that Capitalism with its competitiveness, its reactivity, its profitability which is already unsustainable when it comes to merchandise or equipment of consumption but when it is about human life it is intolerable. While the health situation across the world is deteriorating, manufacturing of healthcare products are more exclusively motivated by profit and existence of manufacturing facilities are being withdrawn from the countries where it is needed the most, as the people of those countries are very poor and unable to afford these medicines. The interest of profit and that of health

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KMSRA

celebration KMSRA has conducted family get-together programmes across the state. Area conventions and a special district conventions, were conducted since January this year till the concluding ceremony of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, where fraternal trade union organizations were also invited,. The conclusion of the Diamond Jubilee celebration was held on 15th October 2017 at Alleppey. The

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Wallace

Wallace throughout the country. Field workers of Wallace, however, did not get cowed down. The further attack actually aroused them further. At a call by FMRAI, in time less than 24 hours, Flash Strike was organized at height of spirit in the whole of country. Entire marketing operation in all the divisions came to spontaneous and complete shutdown in all states, union territories, in all major cities and towns. Demonstrations were held before the company's establishment across the country

need comes in irreconcilable conflict here causing serious harm of the people. It was opined to keep constant watch and debate for making health issues healthier and not cost-effective. The general secretary of FNIC-CGT Emmanuel Lepine delivered the concluding speech and thanked all the participants for their contribution. CITU an affiliate of WFTU in our country had nominated Santanu Chatterjee , General Secretary, FMRAI to attend this International conference. Participating in each of the theme-wise debates he highlighted the horrific state of affairs for the common people regarding access to healthcare in India. The high out-of-pocket expenses of the ailing people and the prohibitive costs of the private sector are further adding to their woes. He also highlighted the exploitation of the multinational companies as a result of the policy changes introduced by the Modi government. FMRAI's demand for reduction of drug prices based on cost of production and not on the average market pricing policy as implemented by NPPA. CITU's resolution in Shimla for removal of all taxes (GST) was also recorded. He mentioned about the vehement opposition of CITU and FMRAI to the Indian government on the proposal of strategic sale/ closure of public sector pharmaceutical companies and closure of vaccine producing units. The future struggles of CITU along with other central trade unions and federations of staging Maha Padav from 9 to 11 November at New Delhi along with organising Mumbai rally mobilising thousands of sales promotion employees at the call of FMRAI were also intimated to the participants of the international conference. The meeting adopted a motion to carry forward the conclusions to all parts of the globe and suggested for continent wise review and struggle programmes in the countries.

programme was inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister for Public Works and Registration G. Sudhakaran. The meeting was presided over by K.M. Surendran, President, KMSRA. Mohan C Nair welcomed all and placed his deliberation reminding the contributions and sacrifices of these former leaders, which are exemplary and inspiring. 15 former leaders of the organization attended the programme and shared their past experiences in building the organization and to carry forward the struggle of KMSRA for the rightful demands of its members

Exceptional response of the strike is yet another warning to the Wallace management. Now the question is: should wisdom prevail or not. If not, struggle of the field workers will be further intensified. The denial of union right was adventurously hoisted through a letter by the Wallace management on 9th October which was Monday. Therefore, all the Mondays between 9th October, 2017 and 13th November, 2017 (which again a Monday) is being observed as black Monday in protest against the atrocity of Wallace management. Following this, Wallace field workers will join Mumbai rally and march to Wallace office at Mumbai defying all threat and coercion.

State Rallies

WBMSRU

2500 members of Kolkata and surrounding districts of WBMSRU participated in a rally on 11th October, at Kolkata on policy level demands. The colourful rally was brought out from the Entally market, near the state centre of the union. At the outset a mass meeting was held at Entally, with large attendance by the members of WBMSRU. The mass meeting was addressed by Santanu Chatterjee, General Secretary, FMRAI and Arnab Nag, General Secretary, WBMSRU. Santanu Chatterjee in his deliberation commenting on the non compliance of law by the employers, criticized the policy of the central government, which is encouraging the employers to bend the laws and to deprive the workers in general and the field workers in specific. He announced that tens and hundreds of field workers from the entire length and breadth of the country will be in the street of Mumbai on 13th November and will give ultimatum to the employers from Azad Maidan, Mumbai, demanding compliance of SPE Act and the other statutory provisions and no victimization of the sales promotion employees linking with sales. The meeting was presided by Sumit Roy, Vice President, WBMSRU. The rally travelled through the important area of the heart of the city sounding and resounding slogans. A delegation of WBMSRU met the Labour Secretary, Govt of West Bengal in deputation and submitted a memorandum. Prior to the state rally, memoranda were submitted to the district labour authorities by all the district committees of WBMSRU.

BSSRU

More than 1800 field workers of BSSRU participated in the state rally at Patna and Ranchi, in the state capitals of Bihar and Jharkhand respectively on 10th and 12th October in persuasion of their long pending demands to Central and State Governments. On October 10, more than 1200 medical and sales representatives from all sub units, participated in a colourful rally from Gardanibagh and after covering the important part of the city culminated into a Dharma and mass meeting near Gardanibagh Police Station in pursuance of their long pending state related demand on labour related issues. The meeting was addressed by BSSRU's General Secretary and treasurer, Devashis Roy and Manoj Choudhary respectively along with Dipak Bhattacharjee, Joint General Secretary, FMRAI, Ganesh Shankar Singh, state General Secretary- CITU, Manjul Kumar Das, Convenor, Co-ordination Committee, FMRAI's Secretary, Sanjay Chatterjee, Anupam Kumar, Jt. General Secretary, BSSRU and

leaders from Bank, LIC, NGEF organizations. Leaders of BSSRU greeted the members for their consistent persuasion, for which, the state government has brought Change in the schedule of Minimum Wages

On 12 October, more than 600 field workers brought out a colourful state rally at Ranchi from all subunits of Jharkhand. Starting from Tapovan Maidan the rally culminated at Shram Bhawan, where the mass meeting was addressed by Anirban Bose, President, BSSRU, Prakash Biplab, state General Secretary- CITU, Bhuwan Singh from CITU, Sanjay Chatterjee, Secretary, FMRAI and from BSSRU, Devashis Roy and Manoj Choudhary, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively, Ashim Halder and Anupam Kumar Joint General Secretaries and other fraternal leadership. Principle Secretary of Labour minister Govt. of Jharkhand was met in deputation and a memorandum was handed over. Leadership greeted the members for their movement, which resulted the achievement of the amendment made by the state government in Section 2(s) of Industrial Dispute Act

Zero GST : Convention on at Visakhapatnam

This sub unit of APMSRU under the banner of Prajagya Parirakshana Committee organized a convention on 16 October, at Public Library, demanding Zero GST on medicines and medical devices. A.G. Rajmohan conducted the convention. Around 40 members along with representatives of other fraternal trade unions and mass organizations including SFI, DYFI, Railway etc. attended the convention. Convenor of North Andhra Abhivrudhi

Vedika. Mr. Aja Sharma, in his deliberation, dealt at length about the issue and concluded that the present system of GST has further worsened the situation and made the medicines more costly. He questioned the rationale of imposing tax on medicines, which people buy under compulsion, not by choice. Dr. P Rama Rao, Vice President, State Prajagya Vedika, discussed the ill impact of GST on medicines and how it is affecting the

common people. APMSRU's Secretary, Chandra Mouli also spoke on the subject and also informed the about the programmes implemented by APMSRU demanding Zero GST. The convention was covered by the local Press. Signature collection demanding Zero GST was conducted by Visakhapatnam unit, a rally was brought out and leaflets were distributed amongst the public during signature collection.

Successful wage settlement in BSN

4th wage settlement in BSN Medical and the 8th, in continuation of the earlier 4 settlements in Beiersdorf was signed on 31st October, 2017 at Mumbai between the management and the Negotiating Committee of FMRAI. The settlement is effective from January 2016 to December, 2018. On behalf of the management, Mr. Kamal Gandhi, Director (Sales), Ms. Deepika Ghosh, Director (HR) and from FMRAI, Ramesh Sundar, A. Venkatesh and Omi Kapoor signed the settlement. The first wage settlement was reached in January 1991 between FMRAI and Beiersdorf and later 3 wage settlements were signed. After the formation of BSN Medical, the joint venture of Beiersdorf and Smith & Nephew in July 2005, 3 settlements were signed with the management. After the expiry of the last settlement in December 2015, fresh COD was presented to the management which culminated into the present wage agreement, after several rounds of negotiations in the last 21 months. The average monthly increase in salary amounts to Rs.3800 with improvement of Rs.1450 in entry point, Rs.200 in Seniority Weightage allowance and increase in all other heads like Education, Medical, Kit, Sample Storage, Vehicle, and LTA was achieved. VDA

continues at Rs.2.25 per point. Daily allowances have also been prospectively increased significantly from October 2017. Headquarter allowance has been increased from Rs.175 to Rs.200 for Non-Metro cities and to Rs. 225 for Metro, Ex-Headquarters from Rs.185 to Rs.225 and Outstation from Rs.500 to Rs.800 (without bill) and Rs. 1075 (with bill). For the period January 2016 to September 2017, all the fieldworkers will be paid arrears of Rs. 4200 towards daily allowances. The category of Medical Sales Representatives and Sales Executives have been covered in the settlement. The management has appointed a large number of Territory Business Managers (TBMs) and Key Accounts Managers (KAMs) who are yet to be organized under councils. BSN Medical is one of the world's leading companies in the Medical Devices Industry with a turnover of Rs.130 crores in India. It was established in April 2001 as a 50:50 joint venture between Beiersdorf and Smith & Nephew. Thereafter, BSN was acquired by Montagu Private Equity firm in early 2006 and later in 2012 by EQTVI. Presently, the company has been taken over by SCA, a Swiss MNC and internationally the company has been renamed as ESSITY.

CRU holds D P Dubey Memorial Lecture at Agartala

D P Dubey memorial lecture was organized by Agartala unit of CRU on 29th October 2017 at Press Club, Agartala (Tripura). At the beginning Flag of CRU was hoisted by Pradip Kr Roy, Vice President,



FMRAI. Pranab Kr Roy, Secretary, FMRAI in his address explained the value of contribution of D P Dubey in organizing the field workers across the country and in laying down the new path fitted to the precise situation of field workers movement. His contribution to field workers movement can be best understood in the background of various stages of development of organization and movement. Sankar Dutta, Member of Parliament and the General Secretary of CITU, Tripura State also spoke in this occasion, emphasising on the increased relevance of trade union movement in Tripura, in the North East and in the country. Piyush Nag, the Working President of CITU, Tripura, who participated in Nagpur Convention of FMRAI in 1962 as a field worker that time, also recounted his experience of FMRAI. A K Roy, Ex-President of CRU recollected his rich association with D P Dubey, especially those days when CRU was formed, drafted the unique constitution of CRU encompassing 7 States and had built CRU with elements of an organized trade union in the midst of anarchy and uncertainty. The meeting was also addressed by Rahul Purkayastha, General Secretary, CRU and Bhaba Haloi, Secretary, CRU. Partha Saha, General Secretary, Professional Service Representatives Union (PSRU), also attended the meeting.

Convention held at Imphal

On October 1, a convention of the sales promotional employees was organised in Imphal, Manipur by CRU. The Chief Guest of the convention was Wangkheml boyaima Singh, Regional Director, National Board for Workers' Education and Development. The convention was also attended by Khetrinmayum Santa, Convener, CITU, Manipur and General Secretary National Construction for Workers' Federation of India, Kangjam Sagar Meitei, Secretary, AIOCD, Abdul



Kuddus, the first Medical Representative of Manipur state (joined 1973) and Takhelmayum Tomba, the first Unit Secretary of Imphal unit of CRU, Potshangban Sonamani, Retd IPS, Sr. Supdt. of Police and Social activist and also by Partha Rakshit, treasurer FMRAI along with CRU's state leadership. After hoisting the organization flag, floral tribute was offered to D.P. Dubey, the first General Secretary of CRU and former General Secretary of FMRAI.

Oinam Prabin Khuman, District Secretary, Imphal unit of CRU welcomed the members, the guests and dignitaries following traditional Manipuri custom. Main speaker of the convention, Partha Rakshit, Treasurer- FMRAI, spoke about the growth of FMRAI and expansion of field workers' movement across the country under FMRAI. He reported about the current phase of movement for establishing the statutory working norms for all sales promotional employees. He also dealt on unethical marketing practice by the Pharma companies and necessity of a stringent government policy to uproot the corrupt practices. He called upon the members for participating in Mumbai Rally and to strengthen the struggle of the sales promotional employees led by FMRAI to establish their rights. Bhaba Haloi, Secretary, CRU and Santa from CITU-, Manipur also presented their deliberations in the backdrop of the present situation. Kangjam Sagar Meitei, Secretary, AIOCD and Potshangban Sonamani also appreciated the role of CRU in carrying out trade union movement despite many difficulties. Rahul Purkayastha, CRU's General Secretary called upon all sales promotional employees in Manipur to come under the banner of CRU's organisation and join hands to carry forward the struggle for amendment of Sec 2 (s) of Industrial Dispute Act in Manipur, declaration of minimum wages @ Rs 18000/- for all sales promotional employees in Manipur and also for other legal demands. The convention concluded with vote of thanks by Md Kh Kabir Saha. A cultural programme was also organized with traditional Manipuri dance "Pung Cholan" and "Thang Ta Jagoi" a form of martial art. Convention was attended by 150 members and was presided over by N Dilipkumar Singh, Vice President, CRU