

## March to Delhi

The recent incidence of death of a 26-year-old young employee of a reputed consultancy firm surfaced a chilling truth. The death of this 26-year-old chartered accountant sparked off the discussion of overworking and toxic work condition and culture at workplaces. Prolonged exposure to toxic working conditions and toxic work culture resulted exploitation of life-threatening magnitude in this tragic incidence of death. Just after this particular incidence another death story of a 42-year-old employee working in a finance company was reported in print and electronic media. It was revealed through media reports that the threats of losing job from his senior level managers for not being able to fulfil the target pushed that employee to the extreme point of collapsing mentally as he was deeply worried for imminent job loss. The workers employed in various industrial sectors, service sectors, industrial establishments in the country are all exposed to these overworking and exploitative working conditions which are leading to major psychological and physiological trauma. In the country there are

huge numbers of youth aspiring for a decent job, but unfortunately the jobs in organised sector are fast diminishing in numbers. Whatever job openings are available now a days are mostly in unorganised sector with extremely volatile service conditions. The Union Government in connivance with the corporate are also ensuring that the labour laws remain confined on paper without being implemented to provide legal support to large section of workers. The labour codes bear a direct testimony to it. The Sales Promotion Employees (SPEs) working in the pharmaceutical companies and in Other Industries are also not an exception. Over the last few years there are many SPEs who have succumbed to illness at young age or lost their lives to tragic road accidents. Such is the volume of work pressure; many SPEs are developing chronic ailments. The pressure to achieve unilaterally imposed sales target is becoming life threatening to the SPEs. Humiliations, harassments during meetings, individual reviews by employers many times triggered road accidents. Apart from harassment and

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■ Demonstration by MSMRA at Azad Maidan, Mumbai

## BLACK DAY observed by Wallace field workers

The Wallace Management has not yet gone back from their earlier standpoint of unilateral introduction of a newer system of work reporting through Geo tagging for the Sales Promotion Employees working across the country. It was observed that even the Wallace Management's threats of transfers and wage stoppages couldn't break the consolidation and unity of the fieldworkers' working in the unorganised divisions. But, this continuous attempt of the Wallace Management with heinous motive has really raised concerns about violating Right to Privacy, as per Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. In addition to the above management is continuing with unfair labour practices, harassment and humiliation of the Sales Promotion Employees in the company's sales



■ Demonstration at Kolkata office of Wallace

meetings defying the Sales Promotion Employees (conditions of service) Act, 1976 leading to widespread discontent amongst the fieldworkers of the company. Furthermore, the management is attempting division among the fieldworkers by providing discriminatory service and working conditions, issuing unjustified transfer and termination letters as well with total disregard to the union, FMRAI. This provocation from the management's end has created resentment

among the large section of Wallace fieldworkers and ultimately as per the decision of AIC meeting of All India Wallace Council it was unanimously decided to observe Black Day on 9th, October, 2024 by all section of fieldworkers of Wallace Council in protest against the various unlawful actions of the Wallace management.

Council members in large numbers availed casual leave on 9th October, 2024 and participated in day-

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## Tribunal order in Himalaya

On 18th January 2021, Himalaya Management served a notice to a section of employees who were working in a division for "ZEUS" that their job is not required after 30th January 2021. This stand of management resulted in job loss of almost 250 field workers of which a vast section of field workers are members of FMRAI. Agitation against these decisions was immediately started by other field workers of the company along with general unity. Good section of the field workers across the country who lost their jobs with the help of their respective state committee eventually took recourse to the legal path. In the state of West Bengal, the effective field workers under the guidance of WBMSRU filed case at tribunal court of the state. After legal procedures for 3 years' court verdict came in favour of the victims. Court ordered reinstatement within 30 days from the date of order (3rd October 2024) along with full back wages and 10% compound interest and also an amount of Rs. 300,000 to be paid by the company to the individuals who persuaded their cases in the Tribunal. This, indeed is a great news to all the struggling workers who fought against the illegal and anti-worker whims of their employer with clenched jaws and the grit to pursue the path of justice.

## Fresh attack by ozone management, field workers resisted

October issue of FMRAI news reported several atrocities by the ozone management on its field workers. Discriminatory service conditions, adverse working conditions like unilateral change in reporting portal, frequent shift of platforms, introduction of new electronic gadgets with surveillance – to name a few of atrocities by this odious employer. All limits were crossed when the management unilaterally reduced the days of locking of reports from



■ Demonstration against Ozone at Howrah

3 days to day basis in the month of September, which naturally caused locking of reports. Fieldworkers, protesting the illegal lock out, continued to send reports via

email following decision of all India committee and FMRAI. Management, in a flagrant manner, withheld a portion of the salaries of the SPEs for the month of September and

through a communication confirmed that they will continue to do the same in the month of October too. On a spontaneous reaction Ozone field workers resorted to one day mass casual leave on 3rd October with massive success. Out of 800 field workers, 432 availed casual leave on the said day. Strong protest demonstrations are being exhibited nationwide in the field to the executives of the company. By depriving legitimate salary to the field workers and their family

in the festive month, Ozone management has gone beyond all levels of inhumanity. The field workers, troubled and disturbed, never succumbed even after threats and coercion from the management. They have fought earlier and made the management to retreat and this time too they continue to fight gallantly even after severe economic deprivation. FMRAI is closely watching the developments in Ozone and preparing field workers for further intensification of struggle in coming days.



## EDITORIAL

# Corporate appeasement and drug pricing

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority or the NPPA that is a part of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, has recently in its notification dated 14th October, 2024 allowed increase the prices of 11 formulations under price control to the tune of 50%. More important than that the NPPA has explicitly admitted in the order that this increase has taken place because of threats by the industry that unless the price revision is allowed, they will withdraw the formulations from the market. The order says, ".....NPPA has been receiving applications for upward price revision under para 19 of DPCO, 2013 since last more than three years citing various reasons like increase in cost of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, increase in cost of production, exchange rates etc. resulting in unviability in sustainable production and marketing of the drugs. Companies have also applied for discontinuation of some of the formulations on account of their unviability." It further adds, "the mandate of NPPA is to ensure availability of drugs at affordable prices. While ensuring affordability, access cannot be jeopardized and the life-saving essential drugs must remain available to the general public at all times. Therefore, unviability of these formulations should not lead to a situation, where these drugs become unavailable in the market and the public is forced to switch to expensive alternatives." How helpless the government is in front of the arm-twisting machinations by the industry is apparent. In fact, over the last two decades, the control of the government in deciding the upper limit of prices of medicines have been eroded; and the onus of this lies squarely on the government itself. The day it was decided that instead of the cost price, the average MRPs of leading brands of the market would be the deciding factor in price control of medicines, literally the control of pricing has been given on a platter in the hands of the market forces- true to the ideals of a liberalized economic principle. This in fact is a direct affront to the interest of the common people of the country who are regularly subjected to the predatory pricing mechanisms of the drug manufacturers and added the high rates of GST on the drugs in India, no wonder the Out of Pocket expenses for buying medicines are one of the highest in the world. In reality, the controlled medicines are now allowed to increase their prices

according to the WPI which is further testimony to the allegiance of the government to run even this crucial aspect of health care of the people according to the forces of the market. Herein lies the justification of the demand of FMRAI and other like-minded organisations for reviving and strengthening the Public Sector pharmaceutical companies. The ideologues of the deregulated economy have been spewing venom against the very concept of government control over the production and marketing of the essential goods of the country for many years. Yet time and again the realities of life have proved that it is the control of the government or the lack of it that had serious impact on the availability and accessibility of essential goods like medicines and vaccines in India. A burning example is the availability of COVID vaccines and the essential medicines recommended by the government during the pandemic. The private sector reaped enormous profit out of the miseries of the people, and manufactured the vaccines according to their own convenience. Yet the order was never forwarded to the PSUs of India where we have all the infrastructure to produce world class vaccines.

In the current instance, many of the products that were allowed to increase in prices are actually essential for treating various serious diseases. They could have easily been manufactured by our PSUs like HAL, BCPL, KAPL etc. But because of the strategic weakening of the PSUs over the years, the people have to now totally depend on the private sector for the supply of even medicines like Atropine, Streptomycin, Pilocarpine, Salbutamol and Lithium. The private sector has no welfare motive, it is run on the principle of profit making and hence the moment they realise that the controlled prices of these products are not fetching the desired profits, the arm twisting starts. Evidently this government, well known for its pro corporate image is also eager to promptly please their friends. For the people, the fate is written on the wall. This once again vindicates the long standing demand of FMRAI, that a crucial issue like health care of which medicine is an integral component, should never be left to the mercy of the corporates, that will only lead to despair and suffering for the common people of the country.

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## ... BLACK DAY

long sit-in dharnas before the company's establishments across the country. This collective action was aimed to compel the management to call the G C meeting for discussion and settlement of all the pending issues. Dharnas and demonstrations were conducted with

state council members and state council subcommittees in various state units namely WBMSRU, OSRU, CRU, MPMSRU, APMSRU, KMSRA, TMSRU. 490 Fieldworkers were on Mass Casual leave and observed Black Day on 9th October, 2024. In Kolkata, the Wallace fieldworkers participated in the dharna before

the company's establishment where General Secretary, FMRAI, Santanu Chatterjee and Devasish Roy, Vice President also addressed. Partha Rakshit, the All-India Convenor of Wallace All India Council also deliberated in the demonstration program. The members of Wallace council are determined to take the struggle forward in future

# Sanofi in sell out spree

Sanofi India Ltd, an India arm of French multinational pharmaceutical giant where company has been demerged into two Companies, Sanofi India Ltd and Sanofi Consumer Healthcare India Ltd as a corporate policy internationally. It is to be noted; worldwide a major stake of around 50% of Sanofi Healthcare is owned by OPELLA Health Care. Proving media reports to be true, Sanofi Health Care's entire 50% stake is going to be offloaded to a U.S equity firm "Clayton Dubilier & Rice", which prompted wide spread repercussion in France, where two major unions of Sanofi CGT & CFDT there have resorted to "STRIKE" on 31st October, 2024 against this deal as there was apprehension that the control to that equity firm, may result in huge Job cuts in France. The French Government was compelled to intervene.

In India we all are aware that since since October 2021, around 54 Neutraceutical division sales promotion employees are victims of the strategic policy of the company to sell all the products to UNS without proper service conditions. In Cardio-Vascular division too,

marketing rights of range of products were given to Emcure pharma where SPEs were offered deplorable working & service conditions & even senior SPEs were been forcefully transferred as probationers to new company.

FMRAI is also very much aggrieved & closely monitoring the developments in Sanofi and all possible support is being extended to HAIRC, the only recognised union for the SPEs in India for their relentless fight to restore the jobs of victimised field workers over last 3 years. There is also widespread apprehension that after transfer of control to the new stake holder "Clayton Dubilier & Rice", attacks will be unleashed on unionised force at Sanofi Health Care members. The jobs of the existing field workers in Sanofi India Ltd is also at state as the management is attempting its leading insulin portfolio to suitable buyers in India.

FMRAI urge upon all to fight against this multinational company's nefarious design in trampling the basic rights of workers in our Country and their policy of retrenchments of their SPEs.

## Turn from P 1

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humiliation, over the years the employers have imposed newer work systems through newer technologies on the SPEs for exerting more work pressure. Their ever-increasing greed for profit materialized in to imposition of hugely exploitative working conditions on the workers. Digital workload and online meetings are being used every now and then as tools for putting pressure on the SPEs. Several SPEs are victimized for not achieving sales target in different companies. The Union government is in direct connivance with the employers of the pharma industry in institutionalising the toxic work atmosphere for the SPEs. Mass scale retrenchments also happened in different companies in recent past.

The Union Government is not implementing its own decision of framing the Statutory Working Rules finalised in the Industrial Tripartite Committee Meeting held in August, 2017 in presence of Hon'ble Labour Minister, Ministry officials, industry representatives and FMRAI on behalf of the SPEs. Moreover, The Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Act, 1976, the only sector specific law for the SPEs has been proposed to be repealed and subsumed in Occupational Health, Safety and Working Conditions Code. In absence of Statutory Working Rules, the employers are at liberty to impose anything and everything as work norms and exploiting the SPEs to their own whims and fancies.

The sales promotion employees (SPEs) shall march to Delhi on 22nd November, 2024 to raise the demand of "Statutory Working Rules". Prior

# Protest in Torrent

An SPE of Stella division, in Cuttack HQ, protested the online meeting called by the management on 4th October'24 because of which ZSM of the division issued a mail on 04th October night to selectively 03 fw's to attend one to one review meeting with him at Kolkata on the very next date Which the fw's couldn't attend due to short notice, In view of it the ZSM issued another mail to these SPEs to meet him at Guwahati where he has planned to work on 07th October and also asked the fw's to stop their field work before meeting with him.

The ZSM and BM of the said SPE exerted tremendous pressure on him since he protested the unjust activities of the management. He took the unfortunate stand of attempting for suicide which was promptly attended. FIR was lodged against the culprit manager, however to the utter surprise it was informed that instead of taking any corrective measure, the HR is forcing the SPE to withdraw the FIR. To protest it was decided to resort to Mass Casual Leave in entire Eastern Zone on 7.10.24. Majority of SPEs of East participated in the programme

to this march to Delhi, series of demonstrative programmes along with submission of memorandum was organised by the state units and subunits of FMRAI. The state units also met the hon'ble Members of Parliament (MPs) and submitted memorandum with persuasion to raise the demand in the Parliament. The SPEs are compelled to move in the path of agitation as their sufferings at the hand of the employers are aggravating day by day and the union government remains as silent onlooker. On 22nd November, 2024, the subunits shall again place the demand to frame Statutory Working Rules to the labour authorities. The central programme of March to Delhi on 22nd November, 2024 on the demand of Statutory Working Rules for the SPEs shall pave the way for future movements spread over the country in the days to come.



# Preparations for March to Delhi all over India

In the last FMRAI GCM, held at Vijayawada, it was declared that on 22nd November FMRAI would organize Delhi dharna in pursuance of the demand for statutory working rule. Prior to that, every state unit should submit the memorandum for statutory working rule to make the state governments aware and all Members of Parliament about the rationale of the demands and the agitation. On 7th October in front of state Labor Commissioner's office at Hyderabad, Telangana Medical Sales Representatives Union organized a dharna program and submitted a memorandum copy of FMRAI to state government. Good number of general members participated in this program and state leaderships elaborated the sufferings of sales promotion employees in absence of statutory working rule. CITU National Secretary R. Karumalayan also greeted the members and promised to extend



■ R Karumalayan addressing the dharna at Hyderabad

CITU's support to achieve the rights. Memorandum was also submitted by subunits wherever possible. Maharashtra State Medical Representative Association also organized dharna program at state labor office and submitted the memorandum. Odisha Sales Representatives Union organized a colourful bike rally on 21st October at Bhubaneswar to submit the same to the state Government officials; they also submitted that to the state MPs wherever possible. On the same day Tamil Nadu Medical and Sales Representatives Association also staged a dharna program in Chennai at labor

office, where CITU state General Secretary Sukumaran inaugurated the program. State leadership along with FMRAI Working Committee Members explained the importance of statutory working rule and called for massive participation in November Delhi rally. They also submitted the same subunit wise. Andhra Pradesh Medical and Sales Representatives Union implemented the district wise memorandum submission program wherever they got the opportunity to physically meet with MPs. Madhya Pradesh Medical and Sales Representatives union also conducted the same throughout the month.

# State rally and Dharna by BSSRU

On 22nd October, two state rallies and dharna in front of Chief Minister of Bihar at Patna and before Labor Commissioner's Office at Ranchi had been organized by Bihar Jharkhand State Sales Representatives Union (BSSRU). With the seven point's state related demands of Sales Promotion Employees, BSSRU state unit went to submit the memorandum to Bihar and Jharkhand Governments. More than thousand members took part in the programs. Both the colourful rallies became vibrant with slogans and drew the attention of general mass. In Patna mass meeting was presided over by Vice President of BSSRU and inaugurated by S.R Rai Joint General Secretary of the state. During inauguration, the need of seven-point demands for SPEs were explained to all members, Anupam Kumar CITU state General Secretary also addressed the meeting. Devashis Roy and Manoj Choudhary FMRAI Secretariat members expressed the ideology and direction of policy level movement of FMRAI. BSSRU General Secretary Shashi Prakash greeted all members for magnificent response and he gave a

call for 22nd November Delhi Rally. A delegate team met with Chief Minister, but they did not receive any positive response. Due to election declaration, some restriction was imposed on democratic movement in Jharkhand, in spite of that BSSRU staged mass meeting in front of Labor Commissioner's office but a colorful rally was organised. The meeting was presided over by Vice President Anirban Biswas, who explained



■ The rally at Ranchi by BSSR union members

the importance of the program. CITU and other fraternal organizations' leaders also were present in the meeting. BSSRU state unit declared that the program would be intensified in the future if the demands are not met. The above programme were preceded by a press meet on 21st October to explain the details of the demands and the programme.



■ Rally by KMSRA on WFTU Foundation Day at Thiruvananthapuram

## WFTU Foundation Day- Dignified Working and Living Condition

World Federation of Trade Union called upon the class oriented and militant trade unions across the world to raise the demand for "Dignified Working and Living Conditions" on the eve of its 79th year of foundation on 3rd October, 2024 and called for celebrating the day as International Action Day by raising the voice of the toiling section in favour of significant wage increases; stable work with full rights; 35 hours of work per week, 7 hours of work per day; health and safety in all workplaces; public and universal systems of healthcare, education and social security; quality working and living environment. FMRAI and its affiliated units are also fighting for the sales promotion employees for dignified working and living conditions. On 3rd October, 2024, KMSRA organized a rally in Trivandrum to celebrate this special day. The rally was inaugurated by C. B. Chandrababu, State Secretary, CITU, Kerala. Ramesh Sundar, President, FMRAI and the KMSRA state leadership were also present and participated in the rally. More than 350 members participated in the programme.

## Fast unto death by junior doctors

The Junior Doctors Front in Bengal went for continuous 17 days "fast unto death" against widespread malpractices in the health sector of the state and brutal killing of the PGT. The state administration blazed all guns to disturb this

absolutely peaceful resistance against the network of corruption, nepotism and threat culture in the state hospitals. Finally, the CM, who also is the Health Minister was compelled for a live streaming meeting with the JDF after which the doctors decided

to withdraw, mainly at the request of the parents of the deceased doctor. But the JDF will continue the protest until the demands on removing malpractices, better health arrangements and treatment facilities are ensured by the state government.

## 1st all India Other Industries Field Workers Convention

The 1st All India Other Industries Field Workers Convention (virtual) was held on 20th October 2024, where more than 500 field workers from 14 states participated. Note was placed by Devasis Roy, Convenor of O I Sub Committee, FMRAI. Ramesh Sundar, President, FMRAI and K. M. Surendran, Vice President, FMRAI presided over the Convention. Santanu Chatterjee, General Secretary, FMRAI deliberated on the present situation of O I Field Workers. Ramesh Sundar described the pro corporate and anti

labour policies of the Central Government and its effect on O I field workers. 19 participants from different state units elaborately narrated their experiences. They also appreciated the move of FMRAI for organising the Convention. Queries from members were replied by the Convenor. Demands are framed to campaign amongst Other Industries Field Workers and to initiate movement against the employers. The convention took tasks, like- identifying 10 companies field workers of Other Industries by the State Units and to

conduct meetings, to organise State Level Conventions by 17th November 2024, to campaign the statutory benefits through leaflets, posters at the working places of O I field workers in the month of November 2024, Individual issues to take up by the subunits through timely intervention with the respective employers, to form councils in companies of Other Industries in different state units and to take all out efforts to reach 10 thousand memberships of Other Industries field workers by December 2024.

## Protest in Hetero

A major tragic incident occurred in the recent past in Hetero Healthcare. Vipin Bajpai, a 40-year-old Sales Performance Executive, was transferred to Agra this year after 15 years of service. He faced severe harassments for sales and other performances at his new location, leading to immense stress. Following a threatening and traumatic review meeting in New Delhi

on 4th October, Vipin suffered a fatal cardiac attack on his way to work the next day. His untimely demise left behind a grieving family. To protest against this tragic incidence directly as a fallout of obnoxious treatment of the management, all SPEs of Hetero Healthcare divisions decided to go for one Day Flash Strike on 8th October, 2024. 577 field workers reported strike on the day throughout the country.

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## Movement in Samsung

intervened for resolution of their main demand to recognise the union which represents four fifth of the total work force of the Plant.

Under the leadership of CITU and courageous "strike" of around 1500 workers

for 37 days compelled the management to withdraw the punitive measures on the agitating workers. The issue of recognition will now be decided by the court instead of the whims of the management thus marking significant

victory for the workers against the atrocities.

FMRAI extends revolutionary greetings and red salute to workers unity and extends heartfelt congratulations to all the workers of Samsung & CITU for their leadership



## MSMRA holds block council conference

**M**SMRA, one of the most important units of FMRAI held its first physical block council conference for 32 identified companies on 20th October after the pandemic.

The open session was presided by Narendra Singh who briefed on the importance of council movement. K.B.Kadam, Jt.Gen. Secretary addressed the gathering. He touched upon exploitation of labour and resistance of working class against such oppressions. Gen.Secy. of MSMRA, Srikant Phose, greeted the audience also explained the role of state council subcommittee and struggles in different councils.

403 delegates from 32 companies, including one lady delegate, attended the conference. The attendance was slightly impacted due to Mahablock (maintenance of railways) resulting in many trains were being cancelled or delayed causing many absentees. All India council leaderships of Emcure, Alkem, Himalaya, Lupin were present on the occasion.



■ E. Karim inaugurating the 51st Conference of KMSRA

## 51st State Conference of KMSRA

**K**MMSRA organised its 51st State Conference at Anathalavattom Anandan Nagar (Panchayat Association Hall) Trivandrum on 2nd and 3rd October, 2024. The conference proceedings commenced on 2nd October, 2024 with the flag hoisting by P. K. Santosh (President) KMSRA and paying floral tributes to the martyr's column. E. G. Mohanan, state committee member and District Vice President of CITU placed the welcome speech on behalf of the Chairman of the Reception Committee. E. Karim, General Secretary of Kerala State CITU formally inaugurated the conference and highlighted about the

struggle of the workers across the world. The inaugural session was addressed by Ramesh Sundar. President, FMRAI and Subramani, General Secretary, KGNA. General Secretary's report was placed by P. Krishnanand and S. Somnath presented the Treasurer's report. 40 delegates including 5 women delegates participated in discussions on the General Secretary's and the Treasurer's report in the conference. Both the reports were adopted unanimously. The conference adopted seven resolutions on Increasing work pressure and harassment at work places leading to suicidal tendencies; On council movement -

Wallace, Ozone, British Biological, Cadila, Albert David, Abbott; Demand for minimum wages in other Industries; Implementation of statutory working rules; Zero GST on medicines and hospital equipment; Against communalism; Appreciating the role of the LDF Government in Kerala. Report of the credential committee was placed by K V Shaju, Secretary KMSRA. 348 delegates including 19 Women delegates attended the 51st state conference. This conference unanimously elected 15 office bearers, 67 state committee members with P K Santosh, P. Krishnanand and Saji Somnath as President, General Secretary and Treasurer.

## Protest in Zydus against atrocious working rules

**T**he management of Zydus Healthcare has been adopting various atrocious working and service conditions and unilaterally imposing them on the SPEs. Management is also not ready to call for G C meeting to resolve the grievances. The SPEs across the country are extremely agitated. The AIC meeting opined for industrial actions against the management and following it protest programme was carried out by all the SPEs of Zydus Healthcare. The programme was to send an E-Mail communication to the management on 22 nd October, 2024 between 11.00AM to 5.00PM to be sent to Mr. Vinod Nair, Vice President, HR. The grievances were daily virtual meetings during field work, and sometimes compelling them to attend the meetings while undertaking journey, intrusion in privacy and disturbance caused in personal life when late night meetings are being conducted. Too many WhatsApp groups are created by the managers and additional activities are being imposed. In the event of leaving the WhatsApp group the SPEs are subjected to harassments. The iPad is very frequently updated with newer menu

introduced unilaterally which are cumbersome. Mandatory submission of the RCPA for each and every doctor on every visit on the same day and harassments based on the submitted data is common. Furthermore, the reporting site is blocked due to inability to submit RCPA data per the company's requirement. Unilateral imposition of these newer working conditions has become a regular phenomenon making the sales promotion work extremely complicated. Threat, intimidation and harassment related to the achievement of sales target and impending transfer of service is causing severe mental agony and trauma to the SPEs. Managers are pressurizing them to get involved in unethical trading. The SPEs are selectively called to the HO in the alibi of sales review which turns up to be a phenomenon of extracting commitment for sales achievement under pressure. This mail sent to the management urges the management to immediately convene a G C Meeting to discuss and resolve the grievances and issues amicably and to provide a conducive working atmosphere. According to estimates almost 900 field workers of Zydus sent the protest mail to the management.

## Victorious movement in Samsung for TU rights

**S**amsung Electronics, MNC giant having their footprint all over the world, produces \$4 billion worth of electronic products at Sriperumbudur unit in Tamil Nadu. The company rampantly violates basic labour laws even the universally established ILO convention & also the law of the land of 8hrs work.

Taking advantages of the pro-employer policies of the government, Samsung management has inflicted immense work pressure upon workers. The daily work shift has touched 11-12hrs a day but overtime payments were not at par with law of the land. For the last 10 years, the workers

are facing stagnation in their wages. Mounting pressure of producing a finished product within 10-15 seconds, continuous 4-5hrs of work have also attributed to the agony & exploitation of the 2000 workforce engaged in the plant. The discontentment of the workers is not correctly redressed for long, though there is a puppet organisation floated by the Management itself called "Internal Workmen's Committee". The South Korean conglomerate, operating in nearly in 75 countries, is notorious for its "no union" policy which is central to a company philosophy of "co-existence and co-prosperity." For the most part of its existence, the

company claimed that it follows a calibrated system of economic incentives (better pay and benefits) to promote inclusive workplace management. However, documentation by different trade unions and media reports have consistently challenged this veil of "co-existence," revealing deplorable working conditions and a systematic management strategy of surveillance, terminations, wage cuts and intimidation to dissuade unionisation. Things changed when in 2021, in South Korea, when it had to allow union formation at its Seoul plant in 2021, paving the way for formal collective bargaining. In July 2024, nearly 30,000 workers

with the National Samsung Electronics Union (NSEU) went on the first recorded strike in Samsung's 86-year history. The growing grievances in Sriperumbudur plant workers have culminated into formation of a Trade Union for collective bargaining and to redress the oppression which is duly supported by CITU. SIWU (Samsung India Workers Union) formed with more than 1500 membership strength and submitted the application on 27th June for registration as per Trade Unions Act, 1926 to get the registration done within 45 days but impediment came after 90 days Labour department did not sanction their

registration as trade Union affiliated to CITU in connivance with Samsung management. SIWU decided to go for strike unleashed upon them and send notice on 17th August, 3 weeks prior to the strike on 9th September. But the labour department declared the strike illegal on the pretext of non registration of the Union. The administration colluded with management, destroyed the striking workers camp in Chennai and arrested the leading functionaries of the newly formed union. Management also terminated leading functionaries and stopped wages of workers and declared the Strike as illegal too. This brutal attack on

striking workers had immense repercussion across the state of Tamil Nadu. Many automobile industry trade unions lent their support and workers from JK Tyres, Apollo Tyres, Hyundai, Yamaha, and BMW held gate meetings in solidarity. NSEU also extended their solidarity for the striking workers in Chennai. The state administration tried to establish the message that the puppet workmen's committee is enough to redress the issues of the workers. By then already the strike have crossed 30 days, massive support from all corners were pouring in for the SIWU workers and the alliance partners of ruling DMK had also

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