



UNION POWER

NTUI

A monthly bulletin of the New Trade Union Initiative

November 2009

Contents

CALL TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TOWARDS THE SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Regional Meeting - Kashmir

AFFILIATE NEWS UPDATES

Wonjin Autoparts Union Bashing

GATWU's Minimum Wage Struggle

Anganwadi Workers Demonstration in Delhi

PROGRAMME FOR SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CAMPAIGN NEWS UPDATES

Campaign on Right to Food

Campaign on Trade

Campaign on Climate Crisis

OTHER NEWS UPDATES

INTERNATIONAL NEWS UPDATES

PRESS STATEMENT

SOLIDARITY STATEMENT

CONDOLENCE – Comrade K Murthy, GAFWU

ALERTS

Editor: Ashim Roy

Printed and Published by Gautam Mody for the New Trade Union Initiative, B-137, Dayanand Colony, First Floor, Lajpat Nagar – IV, New Delhi – 110024
Phone: 011-26214538/ 26486931 Fax: 011-26486931 Email: secretariat@ntui.org.in

Dear Comrades,

You are all aware that the second General Assembly of NTUI is being held in Mumbai from December 13-15, 2009. Delegates to the Assembly from different NTUI affiliates will join several thousand workers to march together on December 13 at 3 PM, from Dadar TT to Damodar Hall Grounds in Parel, to mark the start of the Assembly.

It is in keeping with our trade union history that the entire campus of Damodar Hall will be named *N. M. Joshi Nagar* after the late Com. N. M. Joshi, founding General Secretary of All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), the first national trade union in the country. The Damodar Hall itself has a rich trade union tradition, with some of the earliest discussions on the formation of the AITUC having taken place within its four walls. We are confident that this rich tradition will suitably influence the discussions of our General Assembly.

On the 14th and 15th December 2009, 1000 delegates from across India will evaluate the conditions of working people in the country; debate the attack on the democratic rights of working people by capital; critically discuss discrimination at the work place by gender and by caste, and the complete absence of any substantial social security for working people in the country. Comrades from NTUI affiliates representing workers from 17 states, from just about every sector ranging from the highest technology industries of electronics, automobiles and petrochemicals to large numbers of informal sector workers in construction, transport, and rural work will share their union experiences. Women workers from diverse sectors like garments, anganwadi, domestic work, sex work will be represented by their delegate representatives.

This second General Assembly marks the coming together of the highest constitutional decision making forum of NTUI, to evaluate strategies and struggles, for the first time since its foundation as a national trade union centre in March 2006. At the General Assembly, the programme for the next three years will be defined, based on the experience of the Indian working class movement and NTUI's assessment of its organisational strengths. The NTUI's Principal Office Bearers will also be elected.

Representatives of progressive national trade union centres of India, and progressive trade unions from several other countries including Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Brazil, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa and the USA will be present at the Assembly to extend their solidarity to the NTUI.

The Assembly is a time for serious deliberations. It is also a time for celebration. On each the evening we will have a group of singers and musicians, a play, and a cache of films that mark the best of the cultural traditions of the Indian working class movement. This will be an opportunity for each delegate to exchange experiences, get to know the working class and trade union situation in different parts of the country, and contribute to the working and growth of NTUI. We welcome all delegates to the second General Assembly.

In solidarity,

Ashim Roy

TOWARDS THE SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**Regional Meeting - Kashmir**

A meeting was organised by JKTUC in Srinagar on 10 November. Comrade Ashim Roy attended the meeting along with senior leaders of the JKTUC including Comrades Mohammad Shafi Khan and Nisar Ali Mir. It was decided in the meeting to strengthen the demands for:

1. Regularisation of Rehber-i-Zerat employees
2. Release of arrears of 6th pay commission to Government employees and pensioners with effect from 1 January 2006
3. Regularisation of contractual employees in floriculture department
4. Regularisation of daily wagers
5. Increase in wages of Anganwadi workers
6. One time settlement for State Road Transport Corporation employees and release of arrears to retired SRTC employees.

The Kashmir issue was discussed at length and it was agreed that a resolution of this dispute is possible only through tripartite dialogue. And this resolution has to be preceded by restoration of democratic and human rights of the people of Kashmir. For this the Indian State has to repeal the draconian laws that have been used against the people of Kashmir and other areas of conflict. It was also decided to adopt a constitution of the JKTUC.

AFFILIATE NEWS UPDATES**UNION BASHING AT THE WONJIN AUTOPARTS PLANT IN CHENNAI**

The Wonjin Autoparts Union at the in Maraimalai Ngar plant in Chennai, an affiliate of WPTUC, has been under attack since its formation. The management has been trying to transfer some of its operation to their plant in Pune. A single judge bench in the Madras High Court granted the company permission to move 21 machines to the new plant, which was done immediately. The union had obtained a stay order on appeal of this decision. However, during the course of this litigation, the management declared a lock-out rendering 200 workers jobless. The High Court order directed the management to lift the lock out immediately and that all issues must be resolved through talks with the union and that the management should refrain from victimisation of union activists.

The lock out was lifted but the management has refused to hold talks with the union. In the meanwhile, 21 workers have been transferred to Pune under the pretext of installing the new machinery. While the management gave an undertaking to the High Court that the workers would only be required to stay for a maximum period of 2 months, the workers have been forced to stay on and carry out production in the newly

installed machinery and are being harassed. WPTUC continues the struggle to gain recognition of the union.

PROTEST IN BHILAI INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Pragatisheel Cement Shramik Sangh and Jan Adharit Engineering Mazdoor Union led a protest against Labour Rights violations and shut down the Bhilai Industrial Area, demanding an 8 hour workday, minimum wage, regularisation of contract work and payment of bonus. The union is now battling several false cases on the workers who participated in this protest.

Chhatisgarh Vikas Shramik Manch, a newly formed platform of 5 unions in the cement industry, cutting across party lines, will hold a joint demonstration in Raipur in December.

GATWU STRUGGLES FOR PAYMENT OF MINIMUM WAGE IN GARMENTS IN BANGALORE

The Karnataka Government revised the minimum wage for garment industry from Rs.101 to Rs. 127 in March 2009. The industry has not implemented this revision till date. The Garment and Textile Workers Union (GATWU) submitted a memorandum to the Labour Minister on the non-implementation of the government minimum wage notification. GATWU also filed a case with the Labour Department on non implementation under the Minimum Wage Act. The matter has been investigated by the Labour Department, and strict instruction has been given by Labour Commissioner to all labour inspectors to collect the information about the factories which are not implementing the government order.

ANGANWADI WORKERS DEMONSTRATION

Maharashtra Rajya Anganwadi Karmachari Sangh along with other unions of Anganwadi workers from across the country participated in a demonstration of anganwadi workers and helpers at Parliament House on 23 and 24 November to demand better wages and social security for anganwadi workers. On 24 November, representatives from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Karnataka and Jharkhand met with the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development to present their demands.

The demands included:

1. Anganwadi workers honorarium be raised to Rs.5000 and for helpers be raised to Rs. 3000.
2. Anganwadi workers and helpers are given permanent government employee status.
3. Implementation of pension and retirement benefit schemes.

Government representatives agreed that all demands would be looked into.

NTUI AFFILIATES IN KERALA EXPRESSED SUPPORT TO THE DOCTORS ON STRIKE



NTUI affiliate leaders address public meeting at the Karunagapally taluk hospital

SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME

Day 1

13 December 2009, Sunday

10am- 1pm: Registration

10am-1pm: Meetings of State Councils/Committees
Meetings of Industrial Councils/
Committees

1 -2pm: Lunch

3pm: Close nominations for election of Principal Office Bearers and withdrawal of the same
Meet for March at Dadar TT (Kodad Circle, Under Dadar Flyover)

3-4pm: Rally from Dadar TT to Damodar Hall

4.30 -7pm: Inaugural Programme

7.15-9.00pm: Cultural Performance in the Auditorium of Damodar Hall

9.00 - 10 pm: Dinner at Damodar Hall

Day 2

14 December 2009, Monday

9-10 am: Inaugural Session

9- 9:30 am: Convening the General Assembly
9:30 - 10 am: Presidential Address

10-6 pm: **Delegate Session I:** Presentation of and Discussion on the Organisational Report of NTUI

10-10:50 am: Presentation of the Organisational Report of NTUI by the General Secretary

10:50-11 am: Solidarity Message by International Delegates

11-11:30 am: Tea

11:30am-1pm: Affiliate Responses to the Report

1 -2 pm: Lunch

2-5 pm: Affiliate Responses to the Report

5 - 5.30 pm: Reply by the General Secretary

5:30 - 6 pm: Tea

6-7:30pm: Delegate Session II: Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments

6 - 7 pm: Presentation of Resolutions

7 - 7.10 pm : Listing of all other resolutions

7.10-7.30 pm: Presentation of Amendments to Constitution, if any
Setting up of Commissions

7:30-9.30pm: Cultural Performance in the Auditorium of Damodar Hall

9.30-10 pm: Dinner

Day 3

15 December 2009 Tuesday

9 am- 12 noon: Commissions to discuss the proposed Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments

12 noon-3.30 pm: Delegate Session III: Plenary on Resolution and Constitutional Amendments

12 noon-1.00pm: Report from Commissions

1 - 2 pm: Lunch

2- 3 pm: Report from Commissions Continued

3 – 3.30 pm: Vote on Constitutional Amendments

3.30 – 5 pm: Delegate Session IV: Declaration of Election Result and Announcing the Executive Council

5 – 9.30 pm: Cultural Programme at Damodar Hall Auditorium - Film screenings

8 -9 pm: Dinner at Damodar Hall

CAMPAIGN NEWS

CAMPAIGN ON RIGHT TO FOOD

RALLY FOR RIGHT TO FOOD in Delhi

More than 5000 people rallied outside the Parliament on 26 November demanding immediate legislation of a comprehensive Food Entitlements Act and intervention in drought stricken areas. The UPA government's proposed "National Food Security Act" would entitle each BPL household to a monthly ration of 25 kgs of foodgrains at Rs 3/kg remains highly inadequate in view of the spiraling prices of food items as well as the drought. PBKMS and NFFPFW mobilized in large numbers for the rally.



NTUI AT RIGHT TO FOOD RALLY

The Right to Food Campaign, through several national and regional consultations, prepared a comprehensive draft Food Entitlements Act. Comrade Anuradha Talwar was part of the drafting committee that prepared the final draft. The key demands include:

1. Enact a Comprehensive Food Entitlement Act
2. Universalize the Public Distribution System
3. Special protection including pensions, Antyodaya Cards and cooked meals for excluded and vulnerable groups and in disasters
4. No dilution of Supreme Court orders
5. Affirmative action towards people who are socially discriminated

6. Developing an effective grievance redressal system
7. Protect food sovereignty and farmers' rights; follow a "Food First" policy
8. Immediate action on hunger, drought and starvation

CAMPAIGN ON TRADE

JOINT TRADE UNION POSITION ON NAMA

A two-day national workshop for trade unions and workers organisation on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) Negotiations in WTO was organised on 14 and 15 November 2009 in Delhi. The workshop focussed on the crucial implications of NAMA negotiations on sectors such as automobile, electrical and electronics, leather, garments, fish and fish products and forestry. A memorandum was prepared at this meeting on the possible impacts of NAMA on working people that is being circulated to all progressive trade unions for endorsement. Comrades R Kuchelan and Gautam Mody attended this workshop.

CAMPAIGN ON CLIMATE CRISIS

As the UN climate summit in Copenhagen is getting set to meet, NTUI has been core to an initiative to get different social groups together on a common memorandum outlining a people's stand on the issue. The memorandum signed by over a hundred organisations has been sent to the Indian Government, to bring pressure for it to take a consistent stand in the interest of working people with regard to climate change.

There is a body of scientific data and writing that brings out the urgent nature of this global disaster in the making. Today governments across the world and world opinion are joined in recognising the dimensions and acuteness of the crisis. However, imperialist capitalist interests are also united in trying to ensure that action on climate change does not disrupt capitalist exploitation.

This is a crisis of over-consumption. It is a crisis resulting from the growing inequality of consumption across the world – between countries, and within countries. The energy consumption in the USA is sixteen times consumption levels in India. Within India itself, there are huge consumption differences between the rich and the poor. Wars and conflicts, and the huge war machinery add to this consumption extravaganza. This is an unsustainable state of affairs. There has to be drastic reduction in consumption levels if the environment has to be able to sustain itself. The responsibility for reduction can not be on the poor, who are at consumption levels where they are barely able to survive. This reduction has to come from curbs on the

consumption of the rich – of the developed countries, and of the richer sections of population in all countries.

Why is climate change an issue for trade unions to intervene? Union struggles have always been for regulation of capital. They have been for greater equity – between capital and labour, and within labour itself. The challenge of climate change forces address of all these issues. It has the potential to bring about solidarity among unions, and between unions and other activist groups.

Climate change is also an immediate and pressing issue affecting working people across the world. In India, the effects are being felt in terms of changing rainfall patterns, spread and intensification of drought in large parts of the country, drying of drinking water sources, spread of mosquito and other vector borne diseases, etc. There is a rural agrarian crisis. Cities are becoming unbearable places for the poor, with pollution, scarcities and drying up of basic necessities of water and power. Price rise for basic consumption goods are affecting all workers.

It is in this context that NTUI sought to address climate change as an issue for trade union campaign. We hope that the small beginning made, from the Assembly of Working People in December 2008 up to the run up to the Copenhagen summit in December 2009 will lay the foundation for a lasting solidarity of NTUI with a growing set of committed mass organisations and campaign groups to take up the struggle against climate change to the working class.

OTHER NEWS UPDATES

AI PILOTS ISSUE STRIKE NOTICE, WITHDRAWN AS MANAGEMENT ACCEPTS DEMANDS

Air India pilots issued a formal strike notice on 2 November demanding a payment of their flying allowances and productivity-linked incentives, a major constituent of their salary, by November 10 as promised by the airline. These payments have been pending for two months. The strike was called off on 29 November after the management agreed to examine the mismanagement of AI-IA and examining common employment conditions for pilots of both airlines in the merged entity. The demand of the pilots to be paid according to the fifth pay commission, as eligible, was also agreed to be examined.

AGREEMENT REACHED AT RICO

The month and a half long militant strike by workers of Rico Auto Industries Ltd. in Gurgaon ended after a 45-hour long meeting with the management that ended on 5 November. The agreement was signed by representatives of workers and the management. It was agreed that nine of the sixteen suspended workers would be reinstated. The remaining seven would be subject to an in-house inquiry, conducted by a retired judicial magistrate decided by the Haryana Labour Department. Following the report of the

inquiry officer, the case would be dealt with under Section 33 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. The striking workers would not receive pay for the strike period of 21 September to 5 November.

WAGE HIKE FOR GRAMIN DAK SEVAKS

The Union Cabinet has cleared a comprehensive makeover to the wage structure of 2.76 lakh Gramin Dak Sevaks engaged part-time to distribute letters in rural areas, based on the recommendations of the R.S. Nataraja Murti committee.

The following changes have been made to the structure:

- Time Related Continuity Allowance has been revised between 23% and 32% with effect from 2006. Other allowances, including Cycle Maintenance Allowance, have been hiked and a one-time financial incentive has been included.
- Ex gratia gratuity has been increased from Rs. 18,000 to a maximum of Rs. 60,000 and the severance amount has been hiked from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 60,000.
- Women GDS will now receive maternity grant equal to three months of Time Related Continuity Allowance along with D.A.

CASUAL WORKER NOT ENTITLED TO COMPENSATION: HC

In a strongly anti-labour ruling, the Delhi High Court has said that a casual worker is not entitled to claim compensation from the principal employer in case the worker suffers an accident while performing the work under the direction and supervision of a contractor.

This order was passed by Justice V B Gupta on an appeal filed by M/s Bhasin petrol pump challenging the order of Workmen's Compensation Commissioner awarding damages to a worker, Md Shoibuddin Khan, on the ground that he was an employee under the meaning of the Workmen's Compensation Act. M.S. Khan worked as an electrician with M/s Vikas Electronics which was engaged for doing electrical repair work at M/s Bhasin petrol pump. He suffered injuries and consequently died in 1995 and the petrol pump owner had been directed by the Workmen's Compensation Commissioner to pay Rs. 1.95 lakh to the deceased's mother. The owner of the petrol pump had challenged the directive and has now received the support of the Delhi High Court.

KARNATAKA CIVIC WORKERS CALL FOR A NATIONWIDE RESURVEY OF NUMBER OF CIVIC WORKERS

Members of Karnataka state Safai Karmachari Scavengers Nirmoolana Mahasamsthe will lead a delegation end November to AICC chief Sonia Gandhi

to seek a resurvey to identify the exact number of civic workers in the country.

B. Pedanna, the Association's state president, termed the existing report as fabricated and the survey preceding it as imprecise. The report which has been submitted to the Centre regarding the number of civic workers in the country puts the number at an impossibly small figure of 6.76 lakhs. A reasonably accurate figure is essential in order to address the several violations of labour rights of civic workers, including that of health and shelter.

REGULARISATION DELAY IRKS SANITATION WORKERS IN LUDHIANA

Despite the announcement by the local bodies minister Manoranjan Kalia in 2008 regarding the disbanding of mohalla sanitation committees (MSCs) and recruitment of sanitary workers on regular basis, the promise is yet to be acted upon. While sanitation workers in Jalandhar were handed their appointment letters, non-tenured Ludhiana workers remain victims of local political leaders who are allegedly opposing the re-working of the mode of recruitment.

DELHI FIRST STATE TO RELEASE STATE ACTION PLAN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Delhi released the Climate Change Agenda of Delhi 2009-2012 on 5 November 2009, becoming the first such state to do so. The release of this action plan was in response to the Prime Minister's call to Ministers of Environment and Forests of all state governments to prepare such a plan in keeping with the National Action Plan on Climate Change.

Several other states such as Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh are in the process of finalising action plans of their own. In addition, 10 states have come together to form a Himalayan State Development Forum to look into issues of the Himalayan eco-system.

JET AIRWAYS PILOTS' UNION DER-REGISTERED

The Mumbai Labour Commissioner de-registered the National Aviator's Guild, the pilots' union at Jet Airways (India) Ltd., on 13 November for 'misrepresentation' of facts. Officials from the union said that they were yet to receive any formal communication from the commissioner's office.

GMB TO RAISE WITH NESTLE AT YORK IUF CLAIM THAT IT IS IN BREACH OF ILO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONVENTIONS IN INDONESIA AND INDIA

Britain's General Union (GMB), a UK affiliate of the Geneva based International Union of Food Workers (IUF), agreed to write to Nestle management at York over IUF claims that the company is in breach of International Labour

Organization (ILO) conventions in its treatment of its workers in Indonesia and India.

In India, Nestlé management has refused to meet IUF affiliates' demands for collective bargaining to negotiate a wage increase in line with inflation by maintaining that management has conducted a "scientific survey" to determine the appropriate wage level and wage negotiations are therefore unnecessary".

ANGANWADI WORKERS DEMAND SEVEN MONTHS OVERDUE PAY IN MANIPUR

The Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Union in Manipur have been agitating to demand immediate release of overdue seven months' pending honorariums. They have sent an eleven point charter of demands to the Minister of State (IC) Women and Child Development, Government of India, which highlighted the problems faced by over 22,000 women workers spread across the state of Manipur. It emphasized that workers already come from poor families and delay in payment of honorarium further compounds the problems faced because of rising prices and fluctuating law and order conditions.

Mention was also made of the irregularities created of the ICDS project in Manipur owing to the merger of social welfare division and women and child development division and the creation of social welfare department against several instructions given by the Central government. Workers demanded payment of additional TA/DA for additional work assigned to workers and helpers under various schemes. Other demands included a provision to recruit, as primary school teachers, ANMs and other village based posts, appropriately qualified workers and helpers, revision of honorarium, amongst others.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS UPDATES

KCTU OPPOSES THE BILL ALLOWING GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN LABOUR AND DILUTING TRADE UNION RIGHTS

President Lee Myung-Bak's proposal to bring a new bill to bring greater flexibility to South Korea's labour market was met with opposition by the South Korean trade union, KCTU. The bill would allow multiple unions at each workplace; recognise only one of them as a negotiating partner for management. Moreover it promoted a no-work, no-pay principle which essentially would ban wages for full-time unionists who spend most of their company time on union work. The unions have said that this move is likely to cause an adverse impact on their activities and both major trade unions including KCTU and KFTU have threatened to initiate a joint strike if the government goes ahead with its proposal. Interestingly, the Korean Employers Federation has supported the unions in their opposition

to the bill, which lead the auto conglomerate Hyundai to exit the federation. Following the fierce opposition, the Grand National Party (GNP) has proposed deferring by the introduction of the proposed bill by three years.

ILO CALLS FOR COMPREHENSIVE CRISIS RESPONSE, LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO COMBAT THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

The Governing body of the ILO issued a statement calling for an "employment oriented" response to the global economic crisis outlined in the ILO Jobs pact. The ILO's Global Jobs Pact adopted in June contained "a policy package of practical measures to counteract the immediate crisis and set a course for sustainable recovery." They declared that countries must undertake measures to address large scale unemployment, under employment and rising income inequality. Other issues including the economic crisis and its impact on various sectors of employment as well the Report on Freedom of Association was also discussed.

LAY OFFS OF TEMPORARY WORKERS IN JAPAN'S AUTO SECTOR

According to the latest survey by the labor ministry, 30,067 temporary workers in Japan have either been let go since October or will lose their jobs by March. A majority of these are in the manufacturing sector, accounting for 65 percent. Deregulation in recent years is adding to the increase in workers facing unstable job conditions.

Isuzu Motors Tochigi Plant in Tochigi Prefecture on November 17 announced that it would lay off its 156 fixed-term contract workers and 274 temporary workers as part of a plan to cut 1,400 jobs launched by the Isuzu Motors headquarters. The auto parts manufacturing sector in general have been hit adversely by the economic crisis.

In 1985, when it became legal to dispatch temporary workers, job categories were limited mostly to secretaries and translators. But in 2003 when the labour dispatch law was relaxed, manufacturing jobs were also covered by it. According to a 2007 labor ministry survey, 37.8 percent of workers across the nation were classified as non regular, a 3.2-point increase from 2003.

PRESS STATEMENT

24 November, New Delhi: IMMEDIATELY REGULARISE REHBAR-I-ZIRAATS AS JUNIOR AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANTS

The Jammu and Kashmir Agricultural Technocrats United Forum has been demanding the regularisation of all employees engaged under Rehbar-e-Ziraat. The state government had promised to frame a regularisation policy after the parliamentary elections but no steps were taken in this direction. In July 2009, the Rehbar-e-Ziraats had gone

on a hunger strike reiterating the demand. They withdrew the strike following an assurance from Chief Minister Omar Abdullah that he had already directed the General Administration, Agricultural Production, Finance and Planning Departments to look into the matter and find a solution. But till date there has been no move towards it.

NTUI supports the demands of the Jammu and Kashmir Agricultural Technocrats United Forum for regularisation of the Rehbar-e-Ziraats. NTUI also condemns the ad-hoc decision to increase the monthly honorarium from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 3000 by the Ministry of Agriculture. This honorarium of Rs. 3000 is even lower than the recently revised minimum wage of Rs. 3300 for unskilled workers in the state which applies to all workers working under various central and state government schemes and other corporations and public sector undertakings.

NTUI demands:

- A stop to Contractualisation of Jobs
- Rehbar-e-Ziraats be made permanent government employees and paid at least the minimum wages
- Equal Wages for Equal Work for all workers

SOLIDARITY STATEMENT

SOLIDARITY STATEMENT ON OCCASION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (ZENROREN), JAPAN

The New Trade Union Initiative hails the critical role played by Zenroren in defending and strengthening the democratic trade union movement in Japan and emphasising the importance of increasing united action to fight poverty and defend the rights of the working class.

We are inspired by your history of challenging neo-liberal forces and policies unleashed by structural reforms that have undermined statutes that protect labour rights.

Zenroren plays a key role both in local communities as well as in the workplace, in its campaigns for reduction of working hours, eradication of death from overwork and poverty, payment of living wage and basic wage hike, expanding social protection and regulation of big corporations in the current economic climate. It has campaigned against a revision of the Japanese Constitution, against a discriminatory health insurance system and cutbacks in public expenditure on welfare and education. Zenroren has made significant inroads and progress on organising the unorganised and implementation of existing labour legislation.

NTUI shares your concerns of falling levels of tenured employment and violations of labour rights of contractual employees. We closely follow your recent struggles in support of temporary and fixed term workers, and your campaigns against wage cuts and demands for a fundamental revision of the Worker Dispatch Law.

We share your philosophy of building an international alliance of the democratic working class movement and other social and political movements, in order to advance the struggle of the working class for democratic rights, the right to association and collective bargaining.

We believe that imperialist globalisation can only be resisted by building, in the first instance, strong regional cross border alliances between militant democratic working class organisations.

NTUI looks forward to its continuing relationship with Zenroren and extends comradely greetings and warm solidarity on occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Zenroren and its 2010 Spring Struggle and the struggles to follow.

CONDOLENCE

GAFWU LEADER AND TREASURER K. MURTHY PASSES AWAY

The treasurer of the Garment and Fashion Workers Union, Comrade K. Murthy passed away after a brief illness on 18 November 2009. Murthy worked as an electrician for 17 years in Ambattur Clothing Limited and later at Celebrity Fashions Limited, a garment export factory in the Madras Export Processing Zone-SEZ in Tambaram. Comrade Murthy had led many protests demanding higher wages, bonus and better working conditions since 2006. He had also led the unionising drive in the factory and was placed under suspension by the management under false charges. A condolence meeting was held at Vandalur Community Hall, Chennai on 29th November '09. Comrades M. Subbu Treasurer NTUI and Sujata Mody, Joint Secretary NTUI and President GAFWU addressed the meeting.

RESIST IMPERIALIST GLOBALISATION

BUILD UNION POWER TOGETHER

**JOIN THE MARCH TO N. M. JOSHI NAGAR
ON 13 DECEMBER 2009 AT 3PM**

SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY 13-15 DECEMBER 2009

For **uniting** the working class across political lines and building one union in one industry

For **democratising** production, society and the State

For building **militancy** with solidarity and depth