

# FMRAI NEWS

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

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## General strike

# Enormous blow against terrible attack

**Coming down to street country-wide in large numbers, against blasphemous pact between government and big business, the field workers make the general strike their own strike**

when the big business and the government make blasphemous pact to permanently enslave the workers in India, then workers

section of the workers across colours and shades, defeating misleading politics and tricks, stood together and came down to the streets instead of joining to their works. This strike is yet again remarkable with large participation of the rural poor including the peasants and the agricultural labourers. Field workers, along with all section of workers at the call of

When trade and business of a few persons prevail over life and livelihood of many, when government changes labour laws to the harm and disarm the labour, when price rise erodes the real wage of the workers, when the basic, civilized, time-honoured and internationally acclaimed rights and privileges of the workers, including the right to organize, the right to be



## MPMSRU pays tribute to R. N. Ghosh

R. N. Ghosh, founding President of MPMSRU, breathed his last at Jabalpur, his home town, on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 following massive heart attack. He was also a former Vice President of FMRAI, former All India Convener of German Remedies field workers council and member of CITU Madhya Pradesh Committee. FMRAI deeply condole his death and commits to carry forward the ideology that he subscribed to and the common dream that he always dreamt and the cause which he had always fought for. On 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 MPMSRU organized a condolence meeting in the memory of R. N. Ghosh at Makhana Chaturvedi Hall, Jabalpur. After floral tribute Shailendra Sharma, General Secretary, MPMSRU moved a condolence resolution paying respectful homage to the departed leader on behalf of MPMSRU. R. Vishwanathan, President, FMRAI has remembered his contribution in defending council movement in German Remedies. Badal Saroj, Joint Secretary, AIKS recollected his contribution towards the workers movement in the Jabalpur. M. K. Nandy, former Vice President, FMRAI remembered his comrade-in-arm in the context of fight against the disrupters in the field workers

movement in Madhya Pradesh in 1994. S. K. Talukadar, Vice President and founding General Secretary of MPMSRU, reminded the value of his immense contribution and unmatched foresightedness during the period of inception and formation of MPMSRU and at the time of defending the line of FMRAI in Madhya Pradesh and Chhatishgarh. Jaswinder Singh, Secretary, CPI (M), Madhya Pradesh State Committee admired his unshakeable firm belief in Working Class ideology. Vidhya Khengar, Vice President, CITU MP State Committee remembered his contribution in organizing working class movement in Jabalpur. Anjana Kuraria Joint Secretary AIDWA recollected his contribution towards people's movement. P. R. De, his childhood friend and comrade in arm in his struggle against disrupters and in building field workers movement in Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh and D. M. Deshpandey, Vice President FMRAI also paid his tribute. His wife, Dr. Krishna Ghosh, also paid her tribute. Other members and leaders of MPMSRU also paid tribute. Sanjay Singh Tomar, President MPMSRU presided over this condolence meeting.



General Strike, Satara, MSMRA



General Strike, Jodhpur, RMSRU



Police station witness demonstration when members were picked up from picketing point, Nadia, WBMSRU.



General Strike, APMSRU

## Large scale protest in Torrent against induced suicide



Torrent demonstration at Dawabazar in Nasik by MSMRA

represented by an union, the right of collective bargaining are stamped under foot, when the government poaches away the permanent category of jobs through overnight executive order (fixed term employment), when employers compel the employees to overwork and extract 'forced labour' under the threat of job, when victimization and unjust punishment become the 'rule of the road' in restructuring and liberalization,

have no other option but to put up huge resistance against all this. If liberalization is the celebration of few wealthy persons, then this general strike is the celebration of many. This strike has witnessed spontaneous participation by lakhs of workers, employees, peasants, professionals, shopkeepers, students, teachers, and the sensible men and women from every section of our society. In this general strike all

central Trade Unions and Federations, including FMRAI, across the industry and all over the country joined this strike to make this strike a mass action without example. The Medical practitioners, the health facility workers, the chemists, the wholesales, and the people in general gave their hands of support to make this strike on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2019, truly mammoth.

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## Workshop on Council organization in MSMRA



Responding to the need of the hour and the call for further strengthening the organization given by FMRAI, the workshop on Council movement and organization was organised by MSMRA at BTR-

Bhawan, Mumbai on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The Workshop recorded participation of large number of leaders of MSMRA from across the state. Out of 160 participants representing 42 state councils 38 participants were in state council's leadership. Out of 37 participants representing different units of the state, 31 participants were in the unit leadership who attended the Workshop. Pranab Kumar Ray, Secretary, FMRAI, made his audio-visual presentation in the workshop

on council and organization. The work shop discussed different aspects of council movement & emergence of council subcommittee networking. On organization part the workshop mainly dealt the basic principles of building a strong organisation. Organization part of the workshop also dealt with different aspects of organization including matters related to growth of membership, keeping records of membership, new membership portal etc. A Note on both the subject

was distributed among the participants. Vishweshwar Swami, Convener, State Council subcommittee, placed a note on State council subcommittee functioning & activities in the state council subcommittee in Maharashtra. While concluding the workshop, Shrikant Phopse General Secretary MSMRA, mentioned about the membership of MSMRA and envisaged further organizational developments in MSMRA.

The gory and untimely death of Krishnamurthy V Kulkarni roused widespread anger among Torrent field workers across the country. As soon as the news of this death came all state units of FMRAI across the country organized lightning demonstration in front of the Torrents establishments in the states (including at Kolkata, Chennai, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Warangal, Bhopal, Raipur, Kochi and other places). Field workers of Torrent wore black badges on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> January and protested the continuous

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Editorial

No more death for profiteering

The senseless rush for business and sales takes another life again at Davangere, Karnataka. A Torrent filed worker, Krishnamurthy V Kulkarni, hanged himself to death. He was working for torrent since last 11 years, Torrent is a giant pharmaceutical company in India and Krishnamurthy remained profitable for the company for all these years. But, now, in one fine morning, Krishnamurthy found his life not worth living and committed suicide.

Again the bare fact is that his devastated wife, instead of shedding tear in isolation, rushed to the police station and lodged complaint against the torrent management. She accused the Torrent management of torturing her husband to death. The testimony of his wife is very important. The torment and torture which a field worker passes through does not have many witnesses. But the wives (or husbands) and family members know how a field worker becomes restless, disturbed and upset when desired sales does not come home. Then home becomes hell. Krishnamurthy's wife knew how a healthy and joyful individual got unsettled, distressed, and sorrowful and then took the extreme step.

How come the call of death overwhelms the call of life and how a situation induces a person to kill himself is a matter of enquiry of the sociologists. A psychologist or a psychiatrist will search for a reason from yet different angles. But the co-workers and the family members know the truth for certain. The immense demand for sales performance, threat, humiliation, abuse, maltreatment meted as a routine over a long period of time and linking of sales performance with severe unjust punishments like job-loss, transfer, wage cut, freezing of increment, withholding of wages creates a maddening situation for a field worker, especially who is isolated, forlorn and unorganized in the fierce jungle of a roaring pharmaceutical industry.

27-year-old Ashish Awasthi committed suicide in Indore, Madhya Pradesh in 2018. This time it is 34 year old Krishnamurthy V Kulkarni. These two filed workers and many other in the mean time and before, committed suicide as they could not meet the sales demand of their employers and moreover, the bare fact was that such demands were irrational but it was linked to the service condition and the ultimate punishment. The violence of sales target takes its toll again and again. Should a 'popular', 'democratic' government not address the issues of the field workers, if such government is truly popular and truthfully democratic? Should sensible and responsible central government not use executive power or enact law to protect the valuable lives of the young field workers? The present government which is busy pleasing the wealthy elites does not have much time to look in to the distress of the field workers; neither has it any intention to do so.

But, ensuring justice is possible and necessary. Untimely and unceremonious death of scores of field workers is not without remedy. There exists enough reason for government to intervene and the stop the employers from unleashing incessant torture. It can be done both through executive power and through enactment of law or through use of both.

Field workers' movement demanded of framing of statutory working rules in this perspective only. Statutory working rules has to framed keeping in view the distress of the field workers and not for issuing free license to employers for robbing or killing the field workers. But this government is not ready to hear the voices of the people therefore they have concocted a retrograde and regressive 'draft of statutory working rules' in violation of labour rights and in contravention to the recommendation of the tripartite industrial committee.

Field workers should get relief and respite from torture that is inherent in the private working rules composed by the individual employers in 'go as you like' manner. Such private working rules links sales with service and working conditions and enables employers to take extreme action and cruel punishment against the field workers and help them to impose unbearable workload and irrational work system upon the field workers. In absence of lawful working rules and in absence of job specification, job responsibility and hour of work and with the advent of internet, electronic devices, web-based apps and surveillance, further burden has been mounted upon the field workers and sum total of all these has made their condition further worse.

In this background only FMRAI has demanded reframing of statutory working rules. Should such statutory working rules that protect the workers not come into existence right away? If not, then, how many deaths field workers have to die before this government is able to frame this, appropriately? If this government is profoundly deaf then field workers' movement, coming down to the streets in large number, stand firmly hand in hand with the masses and will find out its own answer.

It is time for field works movement to cry foul against unremitting onslaught. Field workers have paid and are still paying very expensively for their livelihood. Now, enough is enough! No more death to die. If a people's government is so impaired of hearing then the people must tell this government to go. At least, field workers' movement will wish that.

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General strike

The members and cadres of FMRAI took to the streets in large number in all parts of the country on both the days and organized the strike shoulder to shoulder with other central trade unions and federations. Field workers along with other trade unions and federations and the like-minded organization took out procession, organized demonstrations, squads, public meeting and picketing in more than 400 cities and town with banners, flags, festoons, demand posters displaying the demands of the strike. More than 2 lakhs field workers, irrespective of their level of unionization, abstained from joining their work and therefore, all marketing activities came to complete shutdown during the 48 hours of strike.

By organizing picketing field workers enviously guarded their places of work, defied the threat of the management of the companies. In some places there have been repression by the central and the state government who used the power of the authorities to defeat the strike and to disband the unity of the striking workers. In some places police picked up and detained the leading comrades of the subunits and state units of FMRAI. Yet in some other instances FMRAI members have been rounded up by some groups of thugs and physically assaulted. In spite of all these, FMRAI members did not leave the spot and made the strike a striking success.

Besides all the common demands of the working class, the striking field workers also upheld the medicine related demands of the people and the labour related demands of the field workers. No GST on medicines and medical devices, making stringent law with punitive clauses to end to unethical marketing and trading and to scrap the draft statutory working rule, that is fundamentally anti-worker, and reframe the same in line with the recommendations of the tripartite industrial committee.

In Maharashtra General Strike was observed by field workers beyond the membership of MSMRA and throughout the state picketing dharna and other programmes were organized. Independent rally was conducted at Nagpur and Nashik. Motorcycle rally and submission of memorandum to collector was organized at Wardha, demonstration in front of district collector and memorandum submission was organized at Bhandara. Rally and Memorandum submission was organized at Yavatmal, Beed and Satara. Memorandum was submitted to Tahasildar at Karad

after a huge procession. In Malegaon, Shirampur, Sangamner, Baramati and Ratnagiri memorandum was submitted to government authorities. Our members also participated in Rasta Roko, joint rallies and other programmes along with other trade unions. On 9th January 2019, MSMRA organised demonstration in front of the Commissioner of Labour (Government of Maharashtra) BKC Mumbai. Large number of striking field workers arrived at the place of demonstration. Memorandum demanding implementation of SPE Act in Maharashtra-based companies, review and upward revision of Minimum Wages, revised notification for implementing 8 hour-work, removal of ceiling on ESIS benefit, review, implementation and enforcement of Bonus Act (as amended), enforcement of implementation of ID Act by forming grievance redressal forum, was submitted to the commissioner of labour. A delegation of leadership explained the demands once again to the labour authorities. In Gujarat more than three thousand field workers joined strike. GSMRA members organized picketing at Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar, Valsad, Nadiad, Navsari, Mehsana, Bhuj, Himmatnagar, Patan, Rajkot, Amreli and other cities. Because of organized picketing and through support of USV field workers USV management failed to hold sales promotion meeting at Ahmedabad during strike. At Vadodara and Bhavnagar members participated in the rally organized by CITU. GSMRA members at Junagadh participated in Dharna for two days organized by CITU. Memorandum on the demands of the strike was submitted to the District authority at Navsari and Valsad.

In MP and Chhattisgarh field workers and members of MPMSRU on the days of general strike organized rally, dharna and demonstration hand in hand with other trade unions in Bhopal, Raipur, Indore, Jabalpur, Bilaspur, Balaghat, Betul, Bilaspur, Chhatrapur, Chindwara, Durg, Guna, Gwalior, Katni, Khandwa, Raigarh, Ratlam, Rewa, Sagar, Satna, Ujjain and other cities and towns. At Ratlam MPMSRU members organized central picketing point at the heart of the city (Do Batti Chowk) along with other central trade unions and federations and took out rally across the city during two day of strike.

Members of GoaMRA also observed general strike and participated in various programmes with other trade unions. In Kerala picketing was organized along with other trade

unions in all the 14 sub units across the state. The strike was total with no sales promotion activities conducted across the state. Huge number of members participated in picketing, rallies and sit in protest in all the towns and cities of the state with other trade unions. Prior to the strike KSMRA carried out massive campaign amongst the members. In Andhra Pradesh picketing was organized by APMSRU at Vijayawada, Vizianagaram, Vishakhapatnam, Kakinada, Tanuku, Bhimabaram, Eluru, Guntur, Ongole, Nellore, Tirupati, Kadapa, Anantapur, Nandyal and other cities. Anantapur unit of APMSRU joined the massive rally organized by all central trade unions. Public meeting following this rally was also addressed by G. Manohar, Secretary, APMSRU. In Tamilnadu picketing was organized by TNMSRA along with other trade unions at Chennai, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Erode, Kanchipuram, Kumbakonam, Madurai, Nagercoil, Salem, Tanjore, Tirunelveli, Trichy, Vellore and also in the union territory of Pondicherry. In Telengana picketing was organized by TMSRU along with other trade unions Hyderabad, Jagtial, Kamareddy, Karimnagar, Khammam, Mahaboobnagar, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Siddipet, Warangal and other cities. In Karnataka picketing was organized by KSM & SRA at Bangalore, Bagalkot, Belgaum, Bellary, Bidar, Bijapur, Davanagere, Hassan, Hubli, Mangalore, Mysore, Raichur, Shimoga and Tumkur shoulder to shoulder to other trade union organizations. In Himachal Pradesh striking field workers joined picketing in seven cities along with other trade unions at Mandi, Shimla, Hamirpur, Dharamshala, Una, Solan and Jassure. The public meetings organised on the strike days were addressed by the leadership of HPMRA. At Shimla a rally was organised by CITU and the members of Shimla unit of HPMRA participated in the rally. The public meeting after the rally was addressed by HPMRA state president Hukam Sharma. In Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand field workers and members of UPMSRA went on strike and organized picketing in Agra, Aligarh, Allahabad, Ambedkar Nagar, Amroha, Azamgarh, Badaun, Bahraich, Ballia, Balrampur, Banda, Barabanki, Bareilly, Basti, Bijnor, Bulandshahr, Chandausi, Chitrakoot (Karvi), Dehradun, Deoria, Dhampur, Etah, Etawah, Faizabad, Farrukhabad, Fatehpur, Ghaziabad, Ghazipur, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Haldwani,

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CRU conference

R. Vishwanathan made the concluding remarks in the conference. A seminar titled 'Scientific temper and future of India' was organized in the venue, during the conference, where Dr. Shyamal Chakroborty, Prof. of Chemistry, University of Calcutta, was the main speaker. The seminar was chaired by the chairman of the reception committee.

Obituary

**Krishnamurthy V Kulkarni**, 34yrs, a field worker of Torrent, in Azuca division at Davangere headquarter, who was working for the company since last 11 years, died on 22nd January, 2019, by hanging himself under mental torture and sales pressure. He left behind his young wife and a kid of tender age (one and half years old). FMRAI deeply condole his death and stand by the bereaved family.

**Amitava Ghosh**, a fieldworker of Emcure (Pharma Division) passed away on 11th January, 2019 at the age of 42 years. After a relentless fight for nearly one and half year against blood cancer he ultimately succumbed to the deadly disease. Members of the state council and sub unit left no stone unturned to extend their hands of cooperation. He joined Emcure in the year 2000 and served our organisation actively as a joint convener of the state council and as local committee member at Agarpara LC in North 24 Parganas district. He has left behind his old mother, wife, a son and a daughter. FMRAI deeply condole for this untimely death and express deepest condolences for his bereaved family members.





**FMRAI rejects management's justification Closure and transfer in Cadila division of Zydus at Kolkata**

Zydus Health Care, a giant pharmaceutical company in India has closed down marketing operations of Cadila division at Kolkata and other headquarters on the ground of viability of the territories. Through an arbitrary instruction, services of the field workers who are based at Kolkata since long have been transferred to different places including distant places. In this letter dated 1st February 2019 the management has reasoned such closure upon stringent competition, newer regulatory measures, price control, etc. Since government policies are bad to the company, then only, the company has shifted such bad thing upon the field workers and then only, asked the field workers to bear the brunt. Finally they zeroed in on the sales performance, making field workers of Kolkata responsible for unfulfilled sales outcome. But it has been proved over and over again that Sales outcome is incidental to many factors, including management's input and the market condition. Sales cannot be the exclusive responsibility of the field workers, neither the government policies are framed by them. Therefore, the argument of viability that has been put forward by the management, does not hold water. Here, in this context, there are specific reasons too. These reasons include shifting of fast moving products like Aten, Ocicid from the division to other divisions, lack of continuous managerial support, irrational de-pooling of Kolkata city since 2016, infiltration of goods due to differential credit policy offered to the stockist, insufficient promotional materials etc. In close examination, it reveals that the closure of marketing operation of Cadila division at Kolkata is completely unjust and unlawful. FMRAI has rejected the contention of the letter and has written back to the management, dismissed management's arguments and demanded immediate resumption of marketing operation at Kolkata and revocation of all transfers back to their respective territories at Kolkata and other places.

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**General strike**

Hapur, Hardoi, Hathras, Haridwar, Jaunpur, Jhansi, Kanpur, Kasganj, Kashipur, Kaushambi, Lakhimpur, Lalitpur, Lucknow, Mahoba, Mahrajganj, Mainpuri, Mathura, Mau, NathBhanjan, Meerut, Mirzapur, Moradabad, Mujaffar Nagar, Noida, Ora (Jalaun), Padrauna, Pilibhit, Pithoragarh, Pratapgarh, Raebareli, Robertsganj, Rudrapur, Roorkee, Saharanpur, Shahjahanpur, Shamli, Siddharth Nagar, Sitapur, Sultanpur, SantKabir Nagar, Unnao and Varanasi. More than five thousand members actively participated in various programs of strike in their respective units. There was complete paralysis of sales promotion activities in both the states. Jaunpur unit of UPMSRA took out colourful rally and submitted memorandum to the district authorities on the demands of the strike on the first day of the strike. On the second day the members of this unit joined joint rally and mass meeting along with other trade unions. In Ghazipur members of UPMSRA actively organized the general strike and joined joint rally and organized picketing points with large participation. Allahabad unit also joined in joint programmes along with other trade unions. In Punjab and Chandigarh

members of PCMSRU members joined strike in large number and organized various programmes during the two days of strike at Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Bathinda, Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur, Patiala, Pathankot, Ferozpur, Moga. At several districts, PCMSRU leadership met assistant labour commissioner and submitted memorandum. In most of the cities Joint programmes were participated by the member of PCMSRU. On the Strike days campaign programmes on medicine related demands of FMRAI attracted the attention of the media there was wide coverage. In Rajasthan many field workers besides members of RMSRU observed general strike and participated in rally, dharna and demonstration hand in hand with other trade unions at Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Ajmer, Alwar, Bharatpur, Bhiwara, Bikaner, Hanumangarh, Pali, Sikar, Sri Ganganagar, Swamihopur, Udaipur and other cities and towns. In Delhi field workers and members of DSMRO responded to the call of general strike in an unprecedented manner and organized the strike very actively by organizing picketing points at all major working places of the field workers including All India Institute of Medical Science, Safdarjung

**General strike**



**General strike, Jalandhar, PCMSRU**



**General strike, Ratlam, MPMSRU**



**General Strike, Shimla, HPMRA**



**General Strike preparation, WBMSRU Rally**

Hospital, Apollo Hospital, Mata Chanan Devi Hospital, Maya Muniram Hospital, Gangaram Hospital, BalaJi Hospital, Holy Family Hospital, Maharaja Agarsen Hospital, Sanjeevan Hospital, Venkateshwar Hospital And Sunder Lal Jain Hospital.. An estimated two thousand field workers in Delhi abstained from their duty. In Haryana members of HSMSRU joined two days general strike. The members participated in various programmes jointly with CITU in the towns and cities of the state. In Jammu & Kashmir many field workers spontaneously participated in the 2 days strike along with other members of their council across the country. In Bihar and Jharkhand more than ten thousand field workers including members of BSSRU actively joined general strike. Picketing was organized at Ara, Araria, Aurangabad, Begusari, Bettiah, Bhagalpur, Biharshariff, Bokaro, Chapra, Daltonganj, Dehri On Sone, Deoghar, Dhanbad, Gaya, Giridih, Hazaribagh, Jamshedpur, Katihar, Laheriasarai, Patna, Purnea, Ranchi, Saharsa, Samastipur, Sasaram, Sitamarhi, Siwan. Members of BSSRU took out Motorcycle rally at Giridih and Jamshedpur during the general strike. Members of BSSRU joined in large number in joint rally and MashaJulius

organized at Begusarai, Bettiah, Bhagalpur, Biharshariff, Bokaro, Chapra, Daltonganj, Dehri On Sone, Deoghar, Dhanbad, Gaya, Giridih Hazaribagh, Jamshedpur, Laheriasarai, Patna: Purnea, Ranchi, Saharsa, Samastipur, Sasaram, Sitamarhi, Siwan. Several management including Sun, Micro Indoco, Cipla, Zydus, Blue cross made efforts to break the strike which was defeated by large mobilization of the field workers. In West Bengal large number of field workers and members of WBMSRU came down to the street during two days of strike at different workplaces, suburbs and town across the administrative districts to organize the strike. Field worker identified themselves with the demands of the strike, took the strike as their own strike and defended the strike with all their might, organized rallies squads and picketing at Kolkata, 24 Parganas North, 24 Parganas south, Howrah, Hooghly, Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur, Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum, Nadia, Bardhaman, Murshidabad, Malda, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar. In spite of terror unleashed by the ruling party field workers enviously guarded their workplace with flags and banner. Even if the government opposed the strike and used police force

**HAIRC meeting at Visakhapatnam**

The 47<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Hoechst All India Representatives' Committee (HAIRC) was held at Visakhapatnam on 24-25 January, 2019. More than 240 field workers of Sanofi, who are members of HAIRC and the state units of FMRAI, attended this meeting. Among the participants there were two women field workers. The meeting started with flag hoisting and by paying respect to the martyrs of the working class struggle through floral tributes to Martyr's column. 'Unite for rights' was the slogan and theme of this annual general meeting. A R Satyanarayana made audiovisual presentation that captured some glimpses of struggle that HAIRC had to undertake with success in the past. The meeting started with presidential address. ParthaRakshit, Treasurer, FMRAI, addressed the members in the main session of the meeting. He explained the background of the AGM in the perspective of the field workers' movement and the struggle of the working class and the mass struggle which is gaining enormous strength given the senseless attack on the workers and the people at the instance of the wealthy class, the big business and the government. Chandra Mouli, Secretary, APMSRU and Santosh, Secretary, Vizag unit of APMSRU greeted the members. The reports of the General Secretary and the Treasurer, on behalf of the HAIRC committee were placed, discussed and adopted unanimously. Twenty six members expressed their views on the reports and the secretary and the treasurer gave clarification. The 11 member executive committee with Atul Lahoti as President, U.V. Krishnaiah as General Secretary and B. Chandra Kumar as Treasurer was elected unanimously from the AGM.

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**Large scale protest in Torrent**

barbaric torture of the Torrent management on the sales ground. With amazing spontaneity Torrent field workers across the divisions and designation expressed their anger. On 24th Jan, the company arranged 'Founder's day web cast program' in many places. The management postponed the program in West Bengal (Kolkata), Telangana (Hyderabad) and Kerala. In some places the shameless management of Torrent asked the field workers to remove the condolence Black ribbon from their chest which field workers' refused to do. On account of this incidence the scheduled programme of the company could not be held at Patna, Siliguri, Bardhaman, Midnapur and Aurangabad. Field workers stood en masse outside the venue which brought further shame to the company. The field workers wore black badges in all other parts of the country as well. Even in the places where the Council consolidation of Torrent is weak (like in Madhya Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, North-eastern States etc) field workers spontaneously wore black badges. In days to come, FMRAI will decide further course of action in consultation with the State unit.

to break the strike, field workers did not leave the field in spite of repression and detention. Nine members of WBMSRU were arrested by police at different places from picketing point at Howrah and Kolkata who were later released following large mobilization and intervention. The thugs and hooligans controlled by the ruling party in the state also attacked the field workers in their picketing point in 24 Parganas North. WBMSRU took out massive rally and held mass meeting in support of the demands of the strike at Kolkata on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2019. In seven north eastern states field workers and members of CRU organized general strike with full force and took out rallies, sat in dharna and mobilized demonstration in co-ordination with other trade unions in Guwahati, Agartala, Bongaigaon, Dhubri, Dibrugarh, Jorhat, North Lakhimpur, Nowgaon, Shillong, Silchar, Tezpur, Tinsukia, Imphal, Dimapur and other cities and towns. In Odisha field workers and members of OSRU organized general strike with enthusiasm and took out rallies and picketing points in tandem with other class and mass organizations at Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Angul, Balasore Baripada, Berhampur, Bolangir, Jeypore, Rourkela Sambalpur and other cities and towns. Our members also joined the rail rook programme along with

other trade unions at some stations. All the state units and subunits of FMRAI took elaborate preparation for two day strike and extensive campaign and propaganda was organized by the members, cadres and activists of FMRAI with a view to popularize the demands of the strike. The elaborate plan of action including special general body meeting at the sub-unit and satellite-unit level, submission of strike notice to the management, organizing convention with other trade unions, organizing street corner meeting, organizing rallies and mass meeting and then, wearing of demand Badge by field workers were implemented with involved participation throughout the country. Thousands of leaflets were distributed to the field workers explaining the 12 point common demands of the central trade unions and additional 6 point demands of FMRAI. Posters were pasted in the market places in majority towns and cities across the country. Another feature was the very innovative posts in the social media supporting the strike demands which could reach a very large section of sales promotion employees who are not members of the union. In state and subunits, there was huge coverage of the demands of the strike. Especially the medicine related demands of the people attracted attention and got wide coverage in print and electronic media.



# Central conference of CRU held at Dibrugarh



The 23rd Central conference of CRU (NER) held at Dibrugarh, Assam on 4th and 5th January, 2019 was attended by 189 delegates from 16 organizational districts of CRU representing seven administrative states (Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland) of the country. A colourful mass rally, with large participation of other fraternal and like-minded trade unions and organizations, was organized in Dibrugarh town on the occasion of this conference which started from the venue following hoisting of the flags of CRU and CITU and ended in the venue after traveling through the streets of the town. Around one thousand member of CRU joined this rally and the open session. The Open session of the conference was addressed by Tapan Sharma, General Secretary, CITU, Deben Bhattacharya, Vice President, CITU and other leaders of the fraternal trade unions. The delegate session was inaugurated by R Vishwanathan, President, FMRAI and the welcome address was made by Dr. Hem Chandra Kalita, head of the

department, Cardiology, Dibrugarh Medical College and Hospital, Dibrugarh. . In delegate session, the reports of the General Secretary and the Treasurer were placed. 44 delegates participated in discussion and made their valuable contribution on the reports. Resolutions, one in support of general strike (8th-9th January, 2019) and another against the pro-employer draft of statutory working rules by the central government, was adopted unanimously from the conference. Santanu Chatterjee, General Secretary, FMRAI, addressed the delegate session and described the current perspective of the field workers movement and briefed upon the impending task. He also narrated the company-wise developments. Sanjay Chatterjee, Secretary, FMRAI, spoke on the perspective of the state related movement and the council related movements carried forward by FMRAI. Following reply by the general secretary and the treasurer the conference reports were adopted unanimously. The conference unanimously elected 43 member executive committee including 15 office bearers and the general council members of CRU. Jamini Barbarua, Rahul Purakayastha and AmitabhaDas were re-elected unanimously as President, General Secretary and Treasurer, from this conference. **▶ To Page 2**

## Wage settlement between WBMSRU and IND

On 2 December, 2018 the 8th consecutive wage settlement between IND and WBMSRU was signed. IND is a small scale sector pharmaceutical company of West Bengal, maintaining bilateral relation with WBMSRU for over two decades. The settlement is effective for three years from April 1, 2018. On account of revision in wage and allowances, there will be an average benefit of Rs.2250/- per month for each sales promotion employee. On behalf of the management, Mr. Malay Roy Choudhury-Managing Director, Mr. Kashinath Deb-Sr. Sales Officer and on behalf of union SisirSaha, President and Basab Roychowdhury, Secretary of WBMSRU along with the council leadership signed the settlement.

## A step ahead in storing and accessing data

### New membership portal of FMRAI

Membership beyond one lakh is not the glory of number alone, even though number alone, and number as such is also extremely important in trade union movement or in any democracy. Be it democratic institution or be it democratic exercise, the number counts and also decides the outcome. This number actually speaks of undiminished attractiveness of the organization of the field workers even in adverse and inhospitable circumstances. It is an important source of the strength of the field workers in the country. But this strength and force has to be employed in heightening and expanding the movement and for that purpose various data in relation to individual members is required, for faster communication from movemental center and for scores of other reasons. Sometimes, in the hearth of a movement, it is required urgently and

immediately. Membership portal of FMRAI has been envisaged, designed and then launched, for this purpose only. This portal will enable the organization to store brief and relevant records of the members and also allow organization to get access to it very quickly. We hope to leave behind those days when we could access with consumption of much time, some incomplete information regarding our members. Now this uniform membership register will keep records of the members across state units and will be accessed and maintained by the state units and FMRAI centre. It will also enable All India councils and the subunits to get quick information about renewal, non-renewal and new enrollment of the members. It will also be useful in relation legal matters. In short the new Membership portal of FMRAI that has already been sent in motion is a step forward towards the future.

## Delhi High Court Bans on line Sale of Medicines

In December, 2018, a bench of Chief Justice Sri R.Menon and Justice Sri V.K.Rao passed an order banning on line sale of medicines through e-pharmacy throughout the country and directed the central and Delhi government to implement it immediately. A PIL was filed by a Delhi based dermatologist, Dr. Z.Ahmed, complaining that medicines are exclusively sold through on line almost without any regulatory checks and resulting huge risks to the patients consuming the medicines and also inter alia affecting the doctors the worse. In January, 2019

hearing the Delhi High court maintained its earlier stand. Next hearing is in February, 2019. Online sales of medicines and e pharmacy going on unabated by violating exiting drug laws of the country. Online pharmacy immensely increases the possibility that substandard drugs, spurious drugs, fake drug or unintended drugs reaching directly to the ailing people, the consumers without any check and control. Thus, the online supply of medicines has serious repercussion for public health. In this context, FMRAI is opposed to online sales of medicines.

# General strike : Enormous blow against terrible attack



General Strike , Trivandrum, KMSRA



General strike, Junagarh, GSMRA



General Strike, Berhampur, OSRU



General Strike, Delhi, DSMRO



General strike, Lucknow, UPMSRA



General strike, Patna, BSSRU



General Strike, Davangere, KSM & SRA



General Strike, Kamareddy, TMSRU



General strike, Imphal, Manipur, CRU