

FMRAI NEWS

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

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Mass dismissal in Himalaya

Field workers' movement fights back

The management of M/S Himalaya drugs has unleashed unprecedented attack on the field workers. Firstly, there has been unprovoked mass transfer of the Himalaya drugs field workers employed under franchise agent (i.e., contractor) named Team lease Services Limited. FMRAI wrote to management immediately in early December, 2020, protested against the terminations and asked the management to discuss with reverse the unjust actions and reinstate all the field workers in the direct pay roll of the company. But good senses did not prevail with the management. Subsequently, management closed down the Zeus(SBU) division of the company on the plea of business sustainability in completely violation of laws of the land. Once again, FMRAI requested management to hold discussion and resolve. The



Demonstration, Himalaya, Lucknow, UPMSRA

management did not act in sensible manner and they failed to resolve the issues through bilateral discussion with the grievance committee of FMRAI.

On the contrary existing field workers in the company have been intimidated with job threats and threats of closure of some more divisions. FMRAI was compelled start massive industrial actions, held protest demonstration

before the executives in the field, in front of the establishment of the company across the country and submitted memoranda with urgent demands. FMRAI also decided to raise industrial dispute individually by the victimized members in respective sub unit based on Section 2(A) of the Industrial disputes Act, 1947. Field workers wore demand badges during joint work with supervisors and managers and have sent mass SMS demanding reinstatement. The acutely numbered management, at this point of time, precipitated further. They started deducting the salaries and from [▶ to Page 3](#)



Demonstration, Himalaya, Vijayawada, APMSRU

Fieldworkers are on the path of struggle

Zydus management has intensified their unfair labour practices against the fieldworkers of the company and trying to impose digitally-feasible-only working systems and procedures, forcing sales promotion

Zydus employees to download new apps under duress. In recent past, management has distributed I Pads to the fieldworkers in some

specific states pressurizing them to use the same in the field for various administrative works, other than detailing of products to the doctors, that attempts to intrude into the privacy and security of the employees in defiance of law. The wages and daily allowances of the fieldworkers are arbitrarily deducted for non-compliance of the unilaterally-imposed arbitrary working systems bypassing bilateral forum of the grievance committee. The leading functionaries of Biochem council are transferred to distant places including the All India Convener with an ulterior motive in this pandemic situation when the Government protocols are strictly restricting various functions and movements. The main intention of the management is to dismantle the union and deprive the fieldworkers of their [▶ to Page 2](#)



Zydus demonstration, Kolkata, WBMSRU

Alkem field workers intensify agitation

Following mass casual leave and Dharna by Alkem field workers on 28th January, 2021 the Alkem management has precipitated further. On 15th February, 2021, the All India Convener of Alkem Council of FMRAI, who wrote letter to the management on 13th February, 2021 in pursuance with his effort upon convening the grievance committee meeting to arrive at reasonable and amicable solution of the issues and grievances of the field workers, was issued transfer order(from Thrissur to Alappuzha). In February only another leading functionary of the council and KMSRA was transferred (from Kannur to Chennai). Previously, Zonal Convener (North) was transferred. Such transfers of the leading functionaries are not only

meant to cow down the voice of protests of the field workers, but also are acts provocative and actions reflecting gross unfair labour practice and thereby, considered as an offence in the eye of law. Instead of addressing the legitimate demands of the Alkem field workers for settlement of long pending Charter of Demands, for issuance of lawful appointment letter in Form A in compliance with the Sales Promotion Employees (Condition of Service) Act, 1976 and rules there under, irrespective of division and designation, for overall rationalization of service and working conditions through bilateral discussion, the management of Alkem has adopted the evil path of



Alkem demonstration, KMSRA [▶ to Page 3](#)

Indoco Remedies Struggle continues

Following successful strike and Dharna throughout the country by the Indoco field workers against wage cuts and other attacks by the management; the fight against the atrocities continued throughout the country. Under the banner of

FMRAI, the SPEs of Indoco are courageously fighting the unilateral change of working conditions by the management. The introduction of call to call reporting with an eye to bring the field workers under the purview of [▶ to Page 2](#)



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One is attacked, all is attacked

Himalaya drugs has dismissed the field workers, employed through Contractor M/S Team lease Services Limited and closed down operation of Zeus division of the company causing consequent dismissal of field workers on the disputable ground of not having success in getting the ambitious sales outcome. Scores of field workers lose vital earning on account of the business decision (to fire employees) and their families, who are only earning members, are the field workers, thrown through the window, to feed the alligators. No doubt, the windows are the windows of the neoliberal zoo (of business and profit alone) and the alligators are the ruthless market forces. Field workers employed under the Contractor are own employees of the company, doing the very job of the company's sales promotion, employed through a clandestine franchise agents(read middlemen)with more adverse working conditions, fewer rights, lesser wages and benefits. Such contractors help maximize profit and operationalize ease of doing business. FMRAI demanded employment of the field workers in the immediate and direct pay roll of company (the principal employer) which they did not do even if the function of sales promotion is a job of perennial nature and a contractual job is neither sustainable nor permissible, either rationally or legally, in perennially employable jobs. On the contrary, they terminated the field workers in complete violation of law of natural justice. Zeus division was created to get more of market share and earn quick profit. But the management failed to make a bomb of it by capitalizing the image of Zeus, the Greek god of thunder (of weather in ancient Greek religion). Now, after dreaming an apparently failed dream, burden is shifted upon the shoulders of the innocent field workers. When field workers and their union protested and challenged this atrocity field workers and their union functionaries face act of vengeance, terror and warned of deadly punishment. They confront further atrocities work confinement, denial of increment, deduction of salaries and expenses and the All India Convener receive unjust charge sheet for performing his legitimate trade union functions. The employer wants to optimize his profit or rise above crises, which was indeed created by its own unchecked greed, by mass dismissal of workers, through reduction of wage or denial of increment. Mass dismissal, not on any disciplinary ground, but on the ground of failed sales and business, is brutality and brutality of worst kind. The charge sheet (without giving opportunity to show cause) against the union functionaries are the acts wild, in the same line of authoritarianism. If union functionaries and members have freedom of association and have freedom of working at the call of, or on behalf of, their union, then in inherent manner, they should have enough of opportunity to exercise such freedom as well. Freedom without opportunity is cruel joke. It is rubbish. Every democratic set-up should ensure democratic opportunities too.

Democracy without opportunities of exercising democratic rights gets reduced to textbook democracy or (speaking more rudely) banana democracy. Union functionary is charged with involvement in activities through social media. The management also claims that in the context of social media there is nothing private of a field worker and the management does not make out a separation line between one's personal and professional life in this context of his employment. By arguing this management argues that every act and deed of a field worker should be linked to his job and nothing personal or private, beyond the interest of the company, can be allowed in the life of a field worker. But the workers are free citizens of India. No wall surrounding them separates them from everything that pertains to society and all the things that is not immediately linked to his job or duty. Beyond the bizarre private interest of amassing profit for and on behalf of the company, there exists the whole world, there exists public interest, and there exists life plentiful. He cannot lawfully be watched over or shadowed at every step; he cannot be overseen or guarded round the clock by some expensively hired legal sentries and he cannot be punished for any of his social activities and his discourses as a conscientious social being. His social functions for the well-being of his fellow men and women, his acts for ensuring justice for fellow citizens cannot ever be construed as dereliction of duties, even if it becomes disadvantageous to, or comes in conflict with, the private business interest of the company. Why then the management attempts to shoot the field worker down and punish him for any of his activities in social discourse? This is not only arbitrary but also appallingly violative of the very democratic and pluralistic values, which this country has always remained, and shall always remain, proud of. Political context encourage the employers. Twenty one year climate activist Disha Ravi was taken in police custody and jailed for as innocent an act as sharing a toolkit in social media. Anyone who argues against the government policies is identified as the enemy of the state. Every voice of dissent is crushed with outrageous display of power. Independent journalists, sensible lawyers, renowned poets, innocent activists, young students, university professors, protesting farmers, even stand-up comedians are acknowledged as 'anti-national' and framed in hundreds of false cases making abuse of penal codes and various disputable acts like Unlawful Activities Prevention Act(UAPA) for raising questions that pertain to the larger interest of the nation. The present government at centre has definitely received the mandate of the people not only for running the executive affairs of the country for no less than sixty months, but for running such affairs in consonance with the pluralistic tradition without constricting the democratic space and without suppressing the voices of the people. This is no mandate for overturning the democracy and

breaking it like a fragile China doll. The employers take cue from the totalitarian trends of the government. They are overjoyed if they are allowed to do as they please. They too desire to crush every dissent. They love to hire slowly and fire quickly. They want to amass most of wealth with least of liability. Under neoliberal setup trade and business is no longer a social function and unfettered profit motif undermine people's need. They no longer want to be bound to 'the specific purposes designated by the State charter' or to the promises made by the constitution. They want freedom from any form of social responsibility that trade and business has ever been asked by the society to discharge. Thus such greed-based business stands in eternal conflict with not only the requirement of the people but also the whole of humanity by exploiting all the valuable natural resources and dirtying the earth and air to the point of irreversible calamity. But, the workers and farmers refuse to be roasted in the fire for the feast of a handful of business houses. Leaving the muddy fields the farmers have embarked on the metalled road near the capital as they refuse to resign to their fate. Workers, peasants and common people across the country, with their strong survival instinct, gather in the roads of struggles. This is the call of the time. Therefore, totalitarianism, of every hue and shade, do not go unchallenged any longer. Be it Himalaya or any other company, field workers fight against closure, dismissal, unjust wages, robbing of rights and against retrograde service and working conditions. The council movement calls upon the entirety of field workers in the organized companies for banding together and protecting each other. 'One is attacked, all is attacked' is the rule that inspires this struggle. Attack in one company is considered as attack in every company, attack upon one field worker is measured as attack on all field workers. Imperialists made this rule in North Atlantic Treaty(article 5) while forming the North Atlantic Treaty Organization(NATO) in 1949 after second world war. This in fact is the weapon of struggle of the field workers. When government retracts from its commitment, if laws are deferred, then fearless struggle and robust organization must compensate that. Right vision, undaunted spirit of struggle, banding together with common purpose and moving together at every step holds the key for putting up successful resistance. Organization has to be built up to the expectation of the class and it has to be the meeting point all section of field workers, who fights against erring employer, irrespective of their political belief. FMRAI, as an organization with distinct class identity, is committed to put up resistance by further broadening the organization and further heightening the struggle. If mass termination in Himalaya is a challenge to the field workers movement today, it has to transformed into a terrible challenge for the atrocious management for tomorrow.

Import dependence cut medicine access

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sector drug companies like IDPL and HAL and the Indian private sector companies in production of bulk drugs and access of the Indian citizens to essential drugs at affordable prices. Government policies in recent years have destroyed the public sector drug companies which in fact was the pride of the country. Government policies also discouraged the Indian private sector drug companies in production of bulk drugs. The present government has always remained dedicated in serving a few industrial families and helped them in monopolizing and capturing the market. The recent scheme of production linked incentive has followed the same path and ensures the undeserved prizes to a few select big companies. There were many contributing factors for which Indian private sector companies shifted their focus from bulk drug production to formulation production. The companies who are still manufacturing bulk drugs have shifted their production from common easy-manufacturing low-margin bulk drugs (so-called 'commoditized' API) for domestic requirement to state-of-art high-margin bulk drugs(complex molecules) for export to regulated markets in the industrialized nation. Therefore, these easy-manufacturing less profitable bulk drugs are outsourced to China. Had the government given enough of encouragement, facilities and incentives to the

small and medium sized drug companies (MSME), they would have been interested in manufacturing these common easy-manufacturing low-margin bulk drugs('commoditized' API) and injurious dependence on China could have been quickly reversed. But the government's unflinching commitment and selfless reliance on a select big business will always prevent this desired reversal of exclusive dependence on medicines 'made in China'. In fact, self reliance is an anecdote circulates among the citizens before and after every time the government gives some undeserved dole to these Big business houses. Therefore, the good cause of affordable healthcare and medicine access of the common people must have to wait till the good senses prevail with this government.

Obituary

Nawal Kumar Burnwal, a field worker of TTK based at Dhanbad and a member of BSSRU died on 20th February, 2021. He was called to the head office of the company in Chennai and his sales performance was rigorously reviewed there on 16th February, 2021. In his way back he became sick and subsequently he died. There exists in seperable link between his review at office and his death. Fieldworkers expressed grief and shock and wore black badges during work. FMRAI condoles this untimely death.

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legitimate trade union rights when the Charter of Demands is pending since long. A complaint petition was filed by the company in Industrial Court of Mumbai against FMRAI to restrain FMRAI from initiating any industrial action. The union(FMRAI) and company were directed by the court to discuss and settle amicably all the pending issues including transfer issues. To uphold the order of H'onble court, FMRAI kept in abeyance all industrial actions. But the management of Zydus instead of settling the issues continued issuing transfer orders to victimize the leading functionaries of Biochem council with a malafide intention. The management is converting the service conditions of the sales promotion employees under coercion and threat in order to break the unity of the fieldworkers. In other divisions the fieldworkers are harassed, humiliated, intimidated and transferred for their legitimate trade union activities across the country in an unabated manner. This has created tremendous resentment amongst the fieldworkers of Zydus in particular and other sales promotion employees in general. The fieldworkers of Zydus have duly raised their voices against the atrocities of the management in earlier occasions. The present arbitrary and unjust punitive actions of the management are compelling the fieldworkers to prepare for a intensified struggle in a befitting manner to protect their rights and privileges and in pursuance of their demands in coming days.

Indoco

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surveillance and turning them into digital age slaves has been protested by the workers. As a result of which their reporting portals are blocked by the management and the wages are either stopped or restricted. The general unity and council subcommittee of FMRAI throughout the country stand beside the Indoco field workers in resisting the attack of the Indoco management by organizing demonstrations in support of the fighting Indoco field workers. On the 20th February, 2021 members of Vijayawada unit launched strong protest demonstration against the management where more than many members of APMSRU attended. On 22nd February, 2021, MSMRA organized demonstration in front of Indoco office in spite of severe restrictions imposed by the state government on account of virus outbreak. Demonstration was also organized by TMSRU at Hyderabad against the management polices in front of the establishment of Indoco. KMSRA organized Dharna in front of the company's establishment which was attended by K.Sunil Kumar ,Secretary, FMRAI and Secretariat members of KMSRA. Members of UPMSRA also took part in demonstration at Lucknow in front of the office of Indoco. In Chandigarh, members of PCMSRU also organized demonstration in front of the company's CFA at Chandigarh.

Hurtful policies of the Government leading to

Import dependence that attempts to cut medicine access

Twenty one essential medicines including Metronidazole (anti-protozoal, anti-bacterial), Chloroquine (anti-malarial), Dapsone (anti-leprosy), vitamin C and BCG vaccine (for tuberculosis prevention), went one and a half times costlier in December, 2019 when the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) raised ceiling prices of these medicines. The pricing authority justified this increase on the ground of rising cost of raw material (bulk drug, active pharmaceutical ingredients, API) imported from China. In early February, 2020, well before declaration of lockdown in India, the Drug Controller General of India asked all state Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to reach out to the drug companies to estimate the stock of 58 essential APIs, which are mainly imported from China. These essential life-saving drugs include Lopinavir, Ritonavir (anti-viral), Amoxicillin, Cephalexine, Doxycycline, Gentamycin, Meropenam (anti-bacterial), Rifampicin (anti-tuberculosis), Paracetamol (antipyretic) and Prednisolone (steroid). Import of these drugs was seriously hampered due to lockdown in China at that time. The Hubei province of China, the major manufacturing centre of these drugs, remained shut due to lockdown following spread of virus after December, 2019. During lockdown in 2020 many media houses reported scarcity of several essential drugs. Such deficiency in medicine availability was caused for many reasons. In early lockdown in some places there was panic buying, in some places administrative excesses disrupted medicine supply. But overall medicine shortage was attributed to a more fundamental reason: excessive dependence on import of basic drugs (API) from China.

Even if India achieves the ostensible title of 'Pharmacy of the developing countries', and even if India produces adequate and huge quantity of formulations (finished drugs; capsules, tablets, syrups, ointment, injection etc.) for domestic consumption and for export, the Indian drug companies manufacture the quantum of API that is only thirty percent of its total requirement. Seventy percent of requirement is met from imports, mainly from China. This import dependence seriously interferes with access to essential medicines, access at a reasonable price and the medicine security of the citizens. In the nineties India was self-reliant in bulk drug production. All essential medicines, including the medicines for most of the prevalent diseases, were manufactured by public sector drug companies like IDPL, HAL and some Indian private sector companies. In the nineties, there came the economic liberalization

and neo-liberal globalization. In reckless liberalization, import duties on many bulk drugs were slashed. Thus, imports became cheaper than domestic production. Therefore many private sector companies stopped manufacturing bulk drugs and started importing them. Policies of liberalization also declared war against public sector drug companies. Therefore, public sector drug companies were made sick through various policy decisions of the central government.

There came another nail in the coffin by way of 2005 amendment of the Patents Act, 1970. The Patents Act, 1970 allowed domestic manufacturing of any and every molecule (API), either patented or off-patent, freely, without any litigation, royalty or hindrance as there was no 'product patent' (i.e., patent monopoly) in India under this patent Act. 2005 amendment (Indian Patent Act, 2005) imposed litigation, penalty and high-royalty and thereby, barred Indian companies from manufacturing of newer patented molecules (API). Given the fact that the production and export of formulation is more profitable, many companies stopped bulk drug production and quickly switched over exclusively to formulation business.

The cumulative result is appalling. Under Indian Patent act the Indian pharmaceutical industry flourished enormously. The Indian companies, private and public enterprises together, became stronger and India attained complete self-reliance in drug production. Several small and medium Indian companies joined the pharmaceutical industry and stated making bulk drugs and formulations. Manufacturing of basic bulk drugs in the country increased from Rs.18 crore in 1966 to Rs. 1518 crore in 1995. ('Indian bulk drugs industry regaining the lost glory', API Report, 2017, a KPMG-CII publication). It was an enormous development that the pharmaceutical industry in India has witnessed. Availability of essential medicines was ensured and there were manifold reduction in drug prices (as compared to pre-1970 situation which was dominated by the profiteering MNCs). Many MNC companies considered less attractive for earning hefty profit. Indian companies started dominating not only the Indian market but also gained access in large number of developing countries and industrially devolved countries including US and the European nations. The dominance of the MNCs in Indian market became a thing of the past. The market share of multinational companies reduced from sixty eight per cent in 1970 to twenty three per cent in 2004 (Ibid).

In 2002, 60% of total production of bulk drugs and 15% of total

production of formulations were exported (remaining 40% of bulk drugs and 85% of formulation catered to domestic requirement) (Ibid). In the financial year 2019-20 it is 18.8% (amounting 3867.11 million dollar) of total production of bulk drug and 76.1% (amounting 15660.78 million dollar) of total production of formulation have been exported keeping the rest for national consumption. (Annul Reports, Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India, Ministry of commerce and industry, Government of India.) In quick time India has reduced itself from a basic drug manufacturer and exporter to a formulation manufacturer and exporter.

Documents of the department of pharmaceuticals reveal increasing dependence on China in the matter of bulk drugs and intermediates. In 2011-12, Rs. 8,798 crore worth of APIs were imported from China. This was Rs. 11,000 crore in 2012-13, Rs 11,865 crore in 2013-14, and Rs 6,521 crore during April-September in 2014-15.' (ETHHealthworld.com, January 28, 2015)

Several bulk drug production plants have stopped manufacturing of essential drugs. To name a few, Penicillin production plants of Alembic, Sarabhai, IDPL, HAL, J K Torrent, Ranbaxy and Standard, Streptomycin production plants of Alembic, Sarabhai, IDPL, Vitamin B12 production plants of Themis, Alembic and MSD and Ascorbic Acid (vitamin C) production plants of Sarabhai, Jayant Vitamin are either not operational or closed ('Indian bulk drugs industry, regaining the lost glory', API Report, 2017, a KPMG-CII publication).

The present government in India is championing, at least through oratorical service, in two very noble causes. One is 'making in India', another is self-reliant India ('Atmanirbhar Bharat'). Therefore the government has earmarked Rs 15000 crores as production linked incentive which will be given to those private companies who will manufacture essential bulk drugs (API), Key Starting Materials (KSMs) and intermediates in India. This prize will be given to them who supposedly will 'make in India' and make real of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

Under this scheme Government will give money to three groups. The first group (Group A) consists of very big companies whose Global Manufacturing Revenue (GMR in FY 2019-20) of pharmaceutical goods is more than or equal to Rs 5,000 crore. This group will get Rs. 11000 crore (73.3% of the total incentives of Rs 15,000 crore) of incentive. The second group (Group B) having Global Manufacturing Revenue (FY 2019-20) of pharmaceutical goods stands between Rs 500

crore and Rs 5,000 crore. This group will get Rs 2,250 crore (15% of the total) of incentive. The third group consists of companies having Global Manufacturing Revenue (FY 2019-20) of pharmaceutical goods less than Rs 500 crore. This group will get Rs 1,750 crore (11.7% of total PLI). A sub-group with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) will be accommodated within the third group.

The history of independent, plural and democratic India shows that the government schemes are always meant to empower the weakest sections and the weaker ones receives the most. In the present nationalistic dispensation this very democratic and plural ideal has been overturned. Here and now, the stronger one receives the lion's share. In present era of globalization animal instinct is a praiseworthy instinct and it is commendable to run business inspired by animal instincts. Therefore, it is no wonder that a few big companies will be benefited from this government scheme and the rules of the animal kingdom will rule in these current phase of monopolization. The Twenty-Ninth Report, of the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers (2016-17, Sixteenth Lok Sabha) felt that import-dependence is no good and it should be corrected. The report stated, 'The Committee are of the strong view that overdependence on imports for its bulk drugs needs is not a healthy sign for the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry. The Committee observes that the recommendations of Katoch Committee and the three task forces are essential to boost the growth of Pharmaceutical Sector and reducing the overdependence on imports'.

With a view to attain self-sufficiency in bulk drugs manufacturing and to reduce dependence on China, the government had set up a committee headed by Dr. V.M. Katoch, former director general of Indian Council of Medical Research. The committee submitted its report in February 2015. The committee suggested setting up of mega parks in large tract land in 5-6 major pharmaceutical manufacturing states, with common water and electricity facility, effluent treatment plants, testing facilities at the instance of the government. The committee also suggested certain tax benefits to the dedicated bulk drug manufacturers. Particularly, the committee recommended revival of public sector units for starting the manufacture of essential critical drugs and vaccines. But, the present government did not implement the Katoch Committee's recommendations. The pandemic has brought to the fore the very vital role of the public

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Fights back

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expense statements of field workers and issued workplace confinement orders disregarding the difficulty, dismay and anger of the field workers. Rubbing salt in the wound management resorted to unjust punitive measures by denying the legitimate trade union rights of the leading functionaries of the union. All India Convener of Himalaya council was charge sheeted on flimsy ground. Management also stated harassing the field workers and the leading functionaries of the council in absolutely unfair, arbitrary and unlawful manner. Against all this nefarious activities of the Himalaya management fresh round of demonstrations were organized across the country in the month of February, 2021. At the call of FMRAI, all the sales promotion employees of Himalaya Drugs across the country will resort to two days of countrywide strike on 15th and 16th March, 2021. Council subcommittee, states and subunits and Himalaya council of FMRAI will work for mobilizing all Himalaya field workers irrespective of divisions and designation to this strike. Demonstrations will be held in front of all the establishments of the company in all cities and town in every state of the country. Strike Notices will be submitted to the executives of the company in the field during joint field work with the field workers in the week preceding the strike (8th March to 13 March, 2021).

Alkem

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terrorization, attack and confrontation. Abandonment of the path of harmonious industrial relation through unprovoked assault the management has generated strong resentment among the field workers of Alkem. On 18th February, all Alkem field workers irrespective of divisions and designations had sent mass messages to the HR manger in the head office asking the revocation of the above transfer orders. Against such high handed actions of the state units of FMRAI including KMSRA (on 19th February, 2021 at Erakulum) and other state units sprang into protest actions and organized demonstration in front of the establishments of the company across the country.

In this context FMRAI has decided to intensify agitation. Protest demonstration and submission of Memorandum in front of Alkem managers in the field will be organized in the month of March, 2021. All field workers of Alkem will wear demand in the forthcoming meeting and conferences of the company. On 15 March, 2021 Alkem field workers will send a message to VP- HR demanding resolution of their issues. Alkem field workers, irrespective of their designation and division, will resort to one day All India Strike on 25th March, 2021. Demonstrations in front of the company's establishment will be organized across the country in the month of March and on the day of the strike.

Guwahati hosts

21st General Council Meeting in CRU

21st General Council Meeting (GCM) of CRU(NER) was held between 19th and 21st February, 2021 in BTR Auditorium at

those of the fraternal organizations paid homage to the martyrs.

building the required infrastructure that will be of immense help for future. Pranab Kr. Roy, Secretary, FMRAI, also addressed the members this occasion. In his speech he highlighted the history of struggles that FMRAI had carried out for establishing the legal, trade unions and collective bargaining rights of the field workers. He stressed upon value of unity for action against the policies of the Central Govt. and for exposing the politics of the ruling parties. On the 3rd and final day of the GCM unanimously adopted resolution against newer forms of attack, resolution on working for defeat the ruling divisive forces in the ensuing assembly in Assam, on state related demands, for making 6-7 July 2021 all India strike of the field workers a success. The GCM also adopted resolution for achieving ambitious landmark in membership CRU in the current year. General Secretary and Treasurer made their replies to the discussion on the reports and the council adopted both the reports with all suggestions, additions and criticisms duly incorporated.

Pranab Roy, in his concluding deliberation, touched upon the membership position of CRU for the year 2020 and urged upon the council members for taking all steps so that a new height can be attained in the current year. Jamini Barbaruah, in this presidential deliberation in concluding part of the session and the council meeting expressed his happiness that the GCM is had been attended by majority of the General Council Members outnumbering the expectation with participation from all sixteen organizational districts. He also stressed upon the importance of intensification of company wise movement and uniform implementation of all programmes across all the units across the states. He also expressed thanks and regards to the CITU leadership, IMA Assam, Dr. Nomal Ch. Bora and to Guwahati district for successfully organizing the 21st General Council Meeting.

After the secretariat meeting with physical attendance

Working committee meeting held on virtual platform

Working committee meeting of FMRAI in virtual platform was held on 12th February, 2021. Eighty four working committee members including FMRAI Secretariat were present in the meeting. Condolences were noted. A brief note was circulated previously on which the meeting was premised. The content of the note was placed by Santanu Chattarjee, General Secretary, FMRAI, explaining the context, the movements, the tasks and organization. He also briefed the Secretariat meeting that was held on 8th & 9th February, 2021 in Kolkata. Relevant issues of the National and international perspective of the field workers movement was briefly presented by Ramesh Sundar, President, FMRAI. World economic crisis, job losses in different industries due to pre and post pandemic were reported. In our country, Central Government has failed to hear the loud voices of working people and thus, changed the hard-earned labour laws. Farmers with their family had been on the street to protest against farm laws which the farmers claimed had been enacted to benefit few big industrial families like the Ambani and the Adani families, he retorted. Massive response and participation by all section of working class people including our members in all India general strike on 26.11.2020 followed by 8th December programme, he reported. In all the programmes at the call of FMRAI be it farmer bills, labor code, or strike, members of FMRAI participated whole-heartily across the states and sub units. It was decided in working committee meeting that FMRAI and the members in the respective states will support the left and democratic forces and will actively participate in ensuring victory of the left democratic and progressive forces and work to the end of defeating the dubious duo of

communalism and neoliberalism. The working committee critically analyzed the membership position across the state units, charted the task keeping the same objective in the year 2021. With a view to guard against erosion of membership in all level renewal of membership was gravely emphasized. The secretariat meeting proposed two days all india strike by all field workers across the industries including the pharmaceutical industry on 6th and 7th July, 2021 with demands of the field workers and the people of the country. Working committee was on the same page with the secretariat, ratified this proposal and chalked out elaborate preparatory campaign and mobilization programmes actively involving all the working committee members, state and subunit leadership, the activists and the members in all cities and towns. The meeting noted with dismay that management in a range of companies have changed the service and working conditions in the excuse of the pandemic and they continue this spree of unscrupulous changes to taking tricky cue from the government. The meeting decided that the council organization at all India and state level and the council subcommittee at all india, state and subunit level will be further strengthened and will remain prepared to bravely confront this newer challenges and should succeed to resist the onslaught. Company wise developments were also discussed. Several programmes in the area of state related movements, Other Industries were also decided in the meeting. In view of the pandemic the GCM of FMRAI will not be held in 2021. In 2022, in the Golden jubilee year, the 26th Conference of FMRAI will be held on 10th to 13th February, 2022. Series of befitting programmes, preceding this conference, will be organized in due course of time.



Open Session

Guwahati. Open session was held in Lakhidhar Bora Khetra on 19th February 2021. Jamini Barbaruah, President, CRU presided over the session. Leaders of fraternal trade union including Champak Das, President, Emami Factory Workers' Union, Indira Newar, General Secretary, Asom Rajjik Anganwadi Karmi Sahayika Sontha, Bhola Sarma, Secretary, CITU, greeted the members. The meeting was also addressed by Bijan Das and Prafulla Sarmah, the former General Secretaries of CRU. The main speaker in the open session was Tapan Sarma, General Secretary, CITU, Assam State Committee. During the open session demand memorandum was submitted to the Labour Commissioner, Govt. of Assam for convening the Minimum Wage Board of Sales Promotion Employees, for declaration of Minimum Wages of twenty one thousand per month with VDA (with full-fledged price-rise neutralisation) and for fixation of working schedule of all the Sales Promotional Employees clocking 8 hours of work. Two labour authorities made occasion to reach there and received the Demand Memorandum in presence of all the members present in the open session. Open session was followed by flag hoisting and paying tribute to martyrs' column. Jamini Barbaruah hoisted CRU's flag and Nripen Ch. Kalita hoisted CITU's flag. Office bearers, state and unit leadership of CRU and

On the same day newly re-built central office of CRU was also inaugurated. Dr. Nomal Ch. Bora, Chairman, GNRC and renowned neurologist of North East formally inaugurated this central office. In his address through virtual platform he greeted CRU for forty eight years of work for all Medical & Sales Representatives. In this deliberation he highlighted the necessity for further improvement in health care system in the country. The members present in the occasion were also greeted by Deben Bhattacharya, Vice President, CITU, Assam, and Bijan Das and Prafulla Sarmah. 2nd day of GCM started with placement of reports of the General Secretary and the Treasurer. Commission papers on Socio-Political & Economic situation, on Organization and on council and council related movements was placed separately during the session. All delegates attending the GCM sat in three groups for commission discussion. Dr. Hemanga Baishya, Hon State Secretary, IMA, Assam & Chairman of the Reception Committee also made his welcome address. In his address he criticized the anti-people, anti-worker policies of the Central Govt. He also narrated the experiences of IMA in carrying out struggles on various demands. During this occasion he also inaugurated the seminar hall of CRU. He commended the organization for

CRU renovates it central office at Guwahati

Sixth union office of RMSRU inaugurated at Bharatpur, Rajasthan

RMSRU owned its sixth building on 11th January, 2021 through purchase; the General Secretary of RMSRU, J. S. Naruka was present at the time of Registration of the new building. This sixth building is also the sixth RMSRU office in Bharatpur Unit of RMSRU at Bharatpur town. This union office was formally inaugurated on 28th February, 2021 by Rakesh Galav, President, RMSRU . Jitendra Kumbhaj, Secretary, RMSRU and the CITU District leadership were also present on the occasion. Large number of RMSRU members of Bharatpur unit took part in inaugural functions. In the mean time on 19th February CRU inaugurated its newly re-

built Central office at Guwahati, Assam. Two union offices of states units of FMRAI, one new and one renovated,

located around 1800 kilometer apart, were inaugurated in about a week's time. Even though the number is extremely

significant in an organization like FMRAI, number alone does not contain all the glory by itself. Number is obviously indispensable as much indispensable is the organizations' ability to respond and act timely against any and every injustice committed against the individual and mass of field workers. The expansion of organization company-wise, town-wise and industry-wise is an urgent task at this hour. In this background, union offices are important central points for day to day functioning of the union and for disseminating the messages of struggle to the workplaces, to and from the movement and to every establishment that employs field workers.

