

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

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Countrywide Agitation in Sanofi

In the October issue of FMRAI News, the news about the drastic and despotic action undertaken by the management of the French MNC Sanofi when it summarily dismissed 54 field workers working in the so called Nutra division of the company was published. These workers who built the image and productivity of the company in the nutraceutical segment for the last many years refused to buy the logic of the so called slump sale and resisted the effort of selling the employment of



Sanofi All India Strike, Demonstration at Kolkata, 22nd October



Sanofi Regional Dharna Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh



Sanofi Regional Dharna Chennai, Tamilnadu



Sanofi Regional Dharna, Hyderabad, Telangana

these workers lock, stock and barrel to a barely known entity called Universal Nutriscience, a company that was formed only in the month of June 2021. Not only did Sanofi violate the required provisions of the law in their eagerness to get rid of these employees, but the buyer company UNS also violated the provisions of various labour laws of the country. The service transfer letter offered to these employees de-categorised them as Sales Executives and put them in the supervisory cadre clearly violating the provisions of the SPE Act, 1976 and the Memorandum of Settlement signed between HAIRC and Sanofi management. These 54 members located throughout the country were members of HAIRC, the internal union of Sanofi with which the company has more than 50 years of bilateral relationship. 37 of these members of FMRAI are located in the state of West Bengal, the rest are in states like Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

After the sale was disclosed by the management to the media and subsequently to HAIRC, the Union with whom FMRAI has a long fraternal relationship, tried it's best to pursue the management and prevail upon them not to proceed with the unlawful job transfer of their members. But it proved to be totally futile when on

the 30th of September; the company retrenched 54 employees pan India.

HAIRC has immediately decided to protest this draconian decision of Sanofi management by adopting various agitational methods throughout the country. FMRAI in its last working committee meeting decided to totally support all of these protests through its state units. On the 22nd of October, more than 250 unionised field workers of Sanofi under banner of HAIRC participated in one day strike. On the day of strike a massive demonstration was organised by WBMSRU in West Bengal in front of the CFA of the company at Badu, Kolkata. More than 150 members participated in the demonstration.

Further on the 27th and 29th of October, all India dharna and demonstrations were called by HAIRC supported by the state

units of FMRAI in front of company premises. In Tiruvallur, Chennai, 33 members of HAIRC coming from Kerala and Tamil Nadu participated in dharna in front of the company CFA. Leaders from FMRAI and CITU addressed the dharna. Members of TNMSRA also joined the programme.

In Hyderabad, in spite of obstacles put up by authorities, successful dharna was organised by HAIRC in front of the corporate office of Sanofi. 42 members travelled all the way from Maharashtra, AP, Karnataka and Telengana to participate in the programme. The dharna was addressed by the leaderships of HAIRC and state leadership of TMSRU.

On the same day a massive dharna was organised by the Eastern zonal members of HAIRC where more than 50 members

ZyduS

Continued agitation

The attacks of ZyduS management on the rights and entitlements of the field workers is being continued for quite some time. The management is showing scant regards to the law of the land. The management is trying to introduce newer working conditions under the garb of digital initiatives almost copying from the IT industry without taking into consideration the applicability of the same in the sales promotion work. Inevitably, this is resulting into imposition of irrational and absurd works which are beyond the existing service and working conditions of the field workers. One clear motive of the management is to intrude in the realm of privacy of the customers as well as the field workers by making these new initiatives mandatory and dishing out threats of disciplinary action if the same is



ZyduS Demonstration, Hyderabad, TMSRU



ZyduS Demonstration, Mumbai, MSMRA

not followed by the field workers.

The collective protests of the field workers against these snooping techniques has been

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Wage agreement in Astra Zeneca

Wage settlements between FMRAI and M/S Astra Zeneca Pharma India Ltd, was signed on 26th October 2021, after a long-drawn-out negotiation on Charter of Demands submitted by FMRAI for Professional Sales Representatives. It is the 10th wage settlement for bargainable section of field wokers (PSRs). Settlement period covered three years (from 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2021).

The bilateralism in Astra Zeneca has endured the test of time and it has been maintained over 10 settlement periods with the united guard of the field workers (PSRs). This present settlement has nine salary grades of basic pay starting from Rs.7000 to Rs.32000 on completion of 36 years of service. There is an increase in VDA in all seven VDA-disbursement-slabs making new rate of neutralization ranging from



minimum of Rs.5.20 per point to maximum of Rs.8.60 per point .HRA has been upwardly revised. There is an increase in LTA. There has been upward revision in the rates of daily allowances with increase of Rs.10 in head quarter allowance, ex-head quarter allowance and out station allowance with new rates of Rs.340, Rs.370 and Rs.750, respectively, for the year 2021.Average approximate weightage (monetary benefits) stands at Rs. 4438 through this settlement. Promotional Material Storage Allowance for all confirmed PSRs will be paid Rs.550 per month being effective from 1st January 2019.

Arrears arising out of this Settlement will be paid within 31st December 2021 to the all PSRs acknowledging the copy of the settlement and by sending the Annexure A of the settlement through All India Convener by 30th November 2021.

The settlement was delayed on account Covid-19 pandemic. However, the unity among the field workers and their unfailing attachment with the union (FMRAI) has made this wage settlement possible.

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Epidemic control Unmindful of science, government promotes private interest

The Lancet, a medical journal of high reputation, in its editorial in September, 2020 criticized the Covid 19 task force of India (under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, MoHFW) for mishandling of medical care during the pandemic and for 'straying from scientific evidence' in several issues including continued recommendation of Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) and fixing un-scientific deadline of 15th August, 2020 (without appropriate clinical trial) for launching of Corona virus vaccine. Many sensible doctors in India lambasted against the unscientific methods of handling the pandemic and the evidence-denying recommendations of the task force.

The 'National task force for Covid 19', recommended HCQ as prophylaxis (to prevent disease) for all risk-prone individual adults by issuing a guideline on 23.03.2020. Social media, at that time, was abuzz in praise of HCQ as an antidote of virus. Many healthcare-givers exposed to high risk and visibly exasperated in the midst of highly contagious and unknown epidemic, consumed HCQ themselves and recommended these tablets to their patients, following the guideline of the task force of the health ministry. Thousands of people consumed HCQ as they thought it to be a panacea against corona virus. The demand for HCQ escalated overnight and Government of India banned export of HCQ.

US president Donald trump, no famous for his medical opinion, advocated consumption of HCQ as treatment of Covid 19. He threatened India (April, 2020) of dire consequences if export-ban on HCQ was not lifted. India complied quickly and lifted the ban. But, after a little while, scientific communities across the world warned against use of HCQ in Covid 19 treatment.

WHO abandoned a large trial (solidarity trial) of Hydroxychloroquine (drug to treat malaria & Auto-immune disease) in Covid 19 in mid-2020 and a second global trail by European countries (France, Italy and Belgium) was also stopped during the same time. A third trial in UK, in May, 2020, was put on hold. All these trials found the drug unworthy of further study because of its serious adverse effects (including cardiac effects) with no noticeable benefit. FDA warned against HCQ in Covid 19 treatment on 1st July, 2020.

But any criticism or warning could not deter health ministry and its task force. The task force, through all its revised version (one after another) of 'National Clinical Management Protocols' till 23.09.21 continued to recommend HCQ in asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic patients in home isolation. Good sense prevailed with the task force only on the 18th month of the pandemic and the task force of health ministry stopped mentioning HCQ in its 'Clinical Guidance' dated 23.09.2021. However, the task force has not issued any warning about HCQ consumption in Covid-19 as yet. Millions of people in India consumed HCQ in the mean time. HCQ sales increased from 274 million doses in 2019 to 371 million doses in 2020. Besides this, Government of India distributed 112 million Hydroxychloroquine tablets as relief measure to states till January 2021.

Ivermectin (an anti-parasitic) is another medicine which was recommended by the task force (till 23.09.21) which was not backed by any scientific evidence. Lack of evidence, however, did not prevent task force to recommend this molecule, nor did it prevent some people to consider it as a miracle drug in Covid 19. The BJP government in Goa declared in May, 2021 that it will give Ivermectin to entire adult population of the state even if WHO warned against use of this drug in the treatment of Covid 19 and regulatory authorities in the US, UK and EU found that there exist 'insufficient evidence' for using the drug against Covid 19 virus.

Therefore, there was consumption, misuse and inappropriate use of different medicines which were recommended by the task force from time to time. Besides these drugs, many un-recommended drugs, including antibiotic, (especially, azithromycin and doxycycline) were misused increasing the risk of high incidences of bacterial resistance in the community. In absence of appropriate evidence-based guidelines from regulatory bodies of the government, huge quantities of unnecessary medicines are still being prescribed and self-consumed by the people. In television the Union Health minister himself was seen recommending a doubtful Ayurvedic concoction named Coronil.

Besides direct supply to the large healthcare facilities, the sale of Doxycycline (200% higher), Ivermectin (900% higher), in open market, had increased substantially in the period between June 2020 and May 2021. There was huge sales of some anti-viral like Favipiravir (without Emergency Use Approval or EUA) was recorded. At one point of time there appeared scarcity of Remdesivir (a new anti-viral with EUA) and it was sold in the black market.

Such situation has further endangered medicine access. In the midst of the epidemic people exhausted their purchasing capacity by buying inappropriate, irrational or hazardous medicines. Unlike in many other countries, in most instances people, do not get medicine free of cost from public facilities, but purchase it only by paying from their own pocket. Besides, high prices of medicines, doubtful concoctions and inessential medicines have further increased the burden. At times, common people ended up purchasing a bundle of inessential medicines instead of purchasing the essential one. Thus, the limited resources get drained, competitively, in junk and distress multiplies.

The regulatory authorities in the industrial countries or the WHO have not recommended any new or repurposed medicine for Corona virus, except corticosteroid, as yet. Researchers have found some medicines quite promising in Covid 19. Some of these medicines, including Tocilizumab (anti-interleukin-6 receptor antibody) and Baricitinib (Janus kinases inhibitor or JAK inhibitor), have received conditional authorization (EUA) by US FDA. Tofacitinib, another promising covid-19 medicine of the same group, is undergoing review by US FDA and under trial. None of these medicines are without serious side effects. However, in appropriate condition these medicines may be proved to be life-saving in severe covid-19 infection.

Tocilizumab is available in India and selling at very high price. Baricitinib in rheumatoid arthritis and Tofacitinib in psoriatic arthritis have been approved by CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organization) but have not been recommended for Covid 19.

Eli Lilly has reportedly planned a 'donation of 400,000 baricitinib tablets', for eligible hospitalized Covid-19 patients in India' and trying to fast-track approval of Baricitinib for Covid-19. Eli Lilly has also signed voluntary licensing agreement with Cipla, Sun, and Lupin for its Baricitinib. Under this agreement, however, baricitinib cannot be exported to other countries where it is also needed urgently. Pfizer sued Indian companies on the question of its tofacitinib patent (Xeljanz) but had finally dropped the patent suit as its attempt of ever-greening of its patent did not succeed (basic patent on tofacitinib expired in 2020). Now it is available through several Indian manufacturers. Still Pfizer is marketing its tofacitinib 5mg brand at Rs. 16000 per 60 tablets in India.

Patent monopoly in these new molecules is making essential and life-saving medicines either exorbitantly priced or unavailable. In the question of availability and affordability the demand for patent waiver under TRIPS has been strongly raised by the countries of the south and it is currently under negotiation at World Trade Organization (WTO). Richer countries, especially, those in European Union are strongly resisting this just demand for patent waiver for Covid 19 medicines.

In this highly contagious disease outbreak it has been imperative to save every citizen from infection to save all citizens. In view of this, even the overtly-privatized capitalist states are arranging vaccines for all. Even those who are not citizens of the country, are being vaccinated (Bangladesh government vaccinates Rohingya refugees). In India government decided to vaccinate people on payment which was undone by the Supreme court. But, the government is carefully protecting the patent monopoly of SSI and Bharat Biotech in vaccine manufacturing by keeping a dozen of vaccine manufacturing companies, including robust PSUs, idle. Therefore, vaccine shortage continues and the virus attains the endemic character in India.

Therefore, India should save its entire people, including the most vulnerable and the poorest among the poor. Save one and save all. Ensure free vaccines and right medicines at affordable cost. Government should not sacrifice people of India at the altar of private business interests.

FMRAI calls upon once again to put people over profit and opposes any attempt that prioritizes profit over people.

Allahabad unit of UPMSRA

Allahabad Unit of Uttar Pradesh-Uttarakhand Medical & Sales Representatives' Association (UPMSRA), organized 36th Annual General Body Meeting on 24th October,2021 at a meeting hall in the Allahabad city. Large number of members participated in the meeting and took part in discussion on the report of the Secretary and the Treasurer. Discussion were centred around the difficulties and problems of the field workers, especially during epidemic outbreak of virus, on huge change in work procedures gradually shifting from conventional work towards virtual work, on monstrous attack of some of the management, on the question of depriving the field workers of their existing rights, repealing the existing labour laws and the anti-workers policies of the Central Government. Neeraj Srivastava, working committee member of FMRAI addressed the members present in the meeting and explained the current perspective and challenges and opportunities of the field workers' movement led by FMRAI. He also explained the politics and policies behind the attack of the Government. Leaders of the fraternal organization including CITU, LIC, BEFI and DYFI attended the meeting and expressed their solidarity towards the struggle of the field workers. Thirteen member executive committee with Ashwani Bajaj, Alok Tiwari and Mohan Singh as president, secretary and treasurer , respectively, were elected from the AGM.

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Sanofi

participated in the programme coming from Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal and Kolkata city. The dharna continued for more than 5 hours and was attended by almost 100 members of the general unity. Leaderships from various councils and WBMSRU as well as FMRAI secretariat members attended the dharna and addressed the members.

On 30th of October, members of UP and Punjab organised dharna in front of CFA premises at Ghaziabad where more than 50 members from HAIRC, CITU and UPMSRA participated. It was also addressed by the leaders of CITU and UPMSRA.

The struggle against the illegal termination of Sanofi management is fast catching the imagination of the entire country and will continue to intensify with active support of FMRAI till the issue is brought to its logical conclusion.

Obituary

Deva Chandra Thakur, a struggling field worker of Albert David, who worked in the company since last 24 years, breathed his last of massive cardiac arrest in the month of October, 2021. He was the former executive member and presently he was serving as Unit President of Bettiah Unit of BSSRU and as Joint Convener in Albert David Council of BSSRU. FMRAI deeply mourns his sudden demise and acknowledge with great respect his contribution to the organization, especially, in the ongoing just struggle in Albert David.



declared dead. He leaves behind his aged father, mother, wife & two children of 8 years and 9 months of age. He was eldest among the children of his parents. MPMSRU Betul unit extended all possible support to the bereaved family. FMRAI sincerely mourns his death.



conveys condolences to his family.

Yogesh Dongre, (39), employed in Alpha Next division of Alkem since last 10 years, a member of MPMSRU Betul unit died on 23rd October, 2021 following a tragic accident that severely injured his throat and vocal cord. He was taken to the Hospital, where he was

Faizan Hussain, a field worker in Zydus Healthcare (Corza Division) based at Haldwani and a member of UPMSRA breathed his last on 13th October, 2021 following a fatal road accident. FMRAI deeply mourns his death and

Patents and Price of Covid Vaccines

J S Majumdar

THE corporate media also had to note the beating that PM Modi's and BJP's image got due to failure in management/ mismanagement of Covid-19 pandemic; bringing in stark reality the absence of public healthcare infrastructure both in urban and rural India; lack of equipment, oxygen and medicines and healthcare personnel; and lakhs of counted and uncounted deaths as aptly penned by parulkhakkar in Shab-Bahini Ganga and the king becoming 'Nanga'.

Realising this opposite under-current prior to four states assembly elections coming within few months, BJP launched a high profile campaign to refurbish Modi's, and its own images by observing the 71st birthday of Narendra Modi by distributing 14 crore bags with Modi's picture highlighting meagre ration distribution; five crore 'thank you' postcards sending to PM by booth-level mobilisation of the people; videos on 'thank you Modiji' for vaccination etc., as measures taken by the BJP government to combat the serious adverse effect of Covid-19 pandemic on the lives and livelihood of the people.

World Disparity

Covid-19 is the disease of the century invading all countries across the world; India is one of the worst-affected nations. How long it and its mutants will continue to live with human beings that nobody knows. Mass vaccination is the most important defence against Covid.

But there is already world disparity in respect of production and availability of Covid vaccine due to high cost-plus patent royalties. In World Health Assembly in May 2021 in Geneva, EU countries promised to share

more vaccine doses with low- and middle-income countries. Yet, as per UNICEF data, out of the total doses administered in the world up to March 30, 2021, 86 per cent was upper- and middle-income group countries; and only one per cent in the world's poorest countries. Nature journal reported so far in Africa one dose / per person is only two per cent of Africa's 1.2 billion people. This is because, among other factors, that they have to import 99 per cent of its vaccines at a high cost. On the other side, there is hoarding of Covid vaccines by the rich countries.

Patents On Vaccine

This has also brought patent issues to the fore. In October 2020, India and South Africa submitted a proposal at WTO to waive intellectual property rights (IPR) or patents for Covid vaccines. Biden administration in the USA also backed the proposal and 100 plus countries, WHO and UNAIDS supported it.

Big pharma companies fiercely opposed the move. They were fully supported by EU countries on the ground that suspending IPR will remove the incentive for drug companies to innovate.

This is also a false claim. Most of the vaccines' research and technology are public-funded. At least 97 per cent of research into the Astra Zeneca-Oxford vaccine – Covishield – has been funded with public money. Moderna, Janssen and biotech all received governments' funding.

US drug MNC Pfizer claims that it opted not to take federal funds offered by the Trump administration under 'Operation Warp Speed'. But, its Covid vaccine technology partner biotech received substantial funding from the German government. The National

Institutes of Health (NIH) patented technology that helped make Pfizer's and Moderna's so-called mrna vaccines possible. Biontech has a licensing agreement with the NIH and Pfizer is piggybacking on that license.

Using patents, the drug monopolies the world over are making Covid pandemic a huge profit-making business. On May 4, 2021, Pfizer announced that the vaccine brought in \$3.5 billion in revenue in the first three months of this year, nearly a quarter of its total revenue. The vaccine production was the largest source of revenue, roughly \$900 million in pretax vaccine profits in the first quarter.

Modi Government's Double Standard

Since independence, mass vaccination like smallpox, polio, rabies, measles, Japanese Encephalitis etc., were never commercialised by the government. For the first time, the Covid-19 vaccine is being commercialised by the Modi government. Not only that, but it is also protecting patents on Covid vaccines.

Modi government left the production of Covid vaccine entirely to the private companies for profit despite re-opening of public sector closed vaccine firms like - Central Research Institute, Kasauli; the Pasteur Institute of India, Coonoor; and the BCG Vaccines Lab, Chennai – as per Supreme Court's order in 2012. There are other suspended PSU vaccine plants like HLL Biotech in Tamil Nadu; Bharat Immunologicals and Biologicals Corporation Limited, Uttar Pradesh; Haffkine Bio-Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited, Maharashtra; and Human Biologicals Institute, Telangana. When the country's entire population has to be vaccinated,

these psus are kept idle.

And, the worst is a Rs 904 crore state-of-the-art Integrated Vaccine Complex (IVC) based in Chengalpattu has also been lying idle since its inauguration in 2016. In 2012, the central government took the decision for the integrated vaccine complex for which over 100 acres of land in Chengalpattu in Tamil Nadu was acquired to be the nodal centre for manufacturing, research and supply of vaccines at affordable prices under the universal immunization programme of the government of India with a total capacity of 585 million doses. HLL Biotech Limited (HBL), a subsidiary of the central government-run HLL Lifecare, was entrusted with constructing the IVC to produce life-saving and cost-effective vaccines, primarily to minimise the demand-supply gap. The cost of setting up the IVC was estimated to be Rs 600 crore. But the union health minister finally stated that it was Rs 904 crore in 2019. While the centre approved the cost escalation in 2017, it did not approve the project escalation to Rs 904 crore in 2019, expressing concerns about its "non-profitability".

Profit Over People's Distress

Under India's inoculation programme, which began on January 16, 2021, the country has been using two vaccines – Serum Institute's Covishield and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin. Despite having deactivated Covid vaccine technology by central government's institute like Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and National Institute of Virology (NIV), under ICMR; Modi government kept all the above PSUs idle, hired the private sector crony Bharat Biotech of Hyderabad and handed over ICMR-NIV Covid vaccine

technology and asked them to produce 'Covaxin' for business and profit.

The patent on Covaxin is being shared between the drug manufacturer Bharat Biotech and the ICMR both entities gaining the royalty payments. The mou between the ICMR and the BBIL (Bharat Biotech International Limited) includes a royalty clause for the ICMR on net sales and other clauses like prioritisation of in-country supplies, said the ICMR director-general.

The Serum Institute of India (SII) has been producing Covishield under license from Swedish-British multinational drug major Astra Zeneca and supplying it for mass vaccination in India at a very high price and sending patent royalties to Astra Zeneca. Raising the patent removal issue at an international forum, the government of India is meekly paying patent royalty to Astra Zeneca through SII.

As per the commercialization of the vaccine plan of the Modi government, effective from May 1, 2021, the SII announced that the Covishield would be sold to states at Rs 400 per shot and at Rs 600 per dose to private hospitals; and Bharat Biotech set the price of Covaxin at Rs 600 per jab for state governments and Rs 1,200 for private hospitals. Both vaccines would be priced at Rs 150 per dose for the central government.

Since May 30, 2021 order of the Supreme Court for free vaccination of all adults both the companies are supplying their patented vaccines to the central government at a cost of Rs 150 per dose. The government estimated Rs 50,000 crore for Covid vaccination.

Now, Pfizer and the Indian government have resumed talks. The company said that it would donate more than \$70 million worth of medicine to India and is trying to fast-track its patented vaccine's authorization.

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responded by the management through unjust retaliatory measures like withholding of expense bills and issuance of threats of grave disciplinary actions. In some instances, at the height of ulterior design, the field workers have even been transferred and then terminated for participating in the protest against the atrocious activities of the management.

The same management took plea of strategic business decision and closed down the operation of Platinex division and retrenched a large number of field workers. In the past even, the franchisee workers were not spared from the ambit of their inhuman decision. In spite of repeated appeal from the union the retrenched workers has not been absorbed as yet in any other operative divisions of the company.

The management failed to respect to any to its commitment even if there exists long standing bilateral relation in Biochem vivo division and in spite of the fact that

FMRAI is the recognized union in the company in all six wage settlements between the company and the union. On the contrary, the management has attempted to break the union while the current charter of demand of 2018 is pending for negotiation. The management makes its design clear by making aggressive attempt to convert the bargainable Medical representative's category into non-bargainable TBM category thereby deceiving the field workers and robbing them of their legitimate legal, trade union and collective bargaining rights.

The organized protests of the field workers against these atrocities were met with increased barbaric attack of the management upon the Field workers. Fifty three field workers of the Vivo division was transferred to distant places including the leaders of the council. The leaders those were actually negotiating the charter of demands were also transferred. The jobs of several of these transferred fieldworkers including

two Grievance/ Negotiating Committee Members of FMRAI were subsequently terminated.

Field workers are fighting against these aggressive attacks with all might. The field workers of Zydus, especially those in Biochem (Vivo) division have embarked upon the path of relentless struggle in defense of their rights. Attack in the Platinex division (shut down and job loss) has been challenged in the office of the Commissioner of Labour in Maharashtra.

On receipt of message that the management was willing to discuss with the Grievance Committee of Biochem and other components of the company to resolve the issues/grievances, FMRAI responded positively and some of the programmes were kept on hold.

In this background only, struggle of the Biochem field workers will continue and further intensify. In October, all fieldworkers of Biochem Vivo Division irrespective their designation across the country boycotted Lunch and during

meeting and conferences. Members of Vivo and Platinex division valiantly participated in all India Dharna and demonstration in front of the head office of the company in Mumbai along with victimized field workers of other divisions in September. Demonstrations were also organized before the establishments of M/S Zydus in various state capitals throughout the country. The field workers of Zydus also participated in the programme. In Maharashtra MSMRA organized a successful demonstration in front of Zydus Healthcare Ltd corporate office in Mumbai.

All state units and subunit council subcommittees are continuously mobilizing all sections of field workers in support of the fighting fieldworkers of Zydus, besides keeping guard against the ulterior motif of the management in deceiving the field workers and converting them to non bargainable category. The market and the customers are also being appraised of the just struggle of the Zydus field workers. The call

for fund collection in the cause struggle of the Zydus field workers has reached the state and sub units across the nation. Support letters expressing solidarity to the struggles of the Zydus field workers are being collected from AICOD, IMA, other associations of doctors and also from the individual doctors. Besides submission of memorandum, strong demonstrations in the field before the Biochem executives are going on across the country. State units are sending protest memorandum to the Labour Minister of Maharashtra against the unfair practices adopted by the management. In the meantime, the state and the subunits are keeping guard no so that the victimized workers replaced by Badli workers in the particular market and territory. In the legal arena, the management committed not to adopt any further coercive steps against the workers till the next hearing date. In this background a negotiating committee meeting is schedule on 15 November, 2021 as per court directives.

MSMRA demonstrates before Svizera, Indoco and Medley in Mumbai



Demonstration at Head Office of Svizera, Mumbai

Demonstration at Head Office of Indoco, Mumbai

Demonstration at Head Office of Medley, Mumbai

MSMRA organized Demonstration in Mumbai on 25th October, 2021 in front of head office of the three companies, namely, Svizera, Indoco Remedies and Medley who continues to mount attack on the field workers on their rights and existing benefits and attempting to impose newer and

service and working condition upon them.

The Indoco management has not paid over three month's wages of the field workers and continues to impose the slave-like service condition upon the field workers. In Svizera besides the ongoing enthusiasm of the management for unilateral

imposition of digitalization, they are denying due wages, annual increments of the field workers, especially to those field workers who are pursuing their wage settlement pending in the courts and refused to accept the unilateral offers by the management and to those who have not surrendered their

rights or abandoned the union. In Medley the management has resorted to transfers of 2 sales promotion employees for not complying with the local managers unlawful demand of parting a part from their earnings and involve in unethical trading. The management also did not pay

adequate compensation to a sales promotion employee who died due to Covid

In this given background MSMRA, mobilizing members of the state and subunit council subcommittee organized powerful demonstrations against the vitriolic attacks upon the field workers in these companies.

FMRAI members observe WFTU foundation day demanding dignified life

In response to the call of FMRAI and CITU for observing the foundation day of World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) as international action day on 76th anniversary of its



Foundation Day of WFTU observed in UPMSRA

foundation (3rd October, 1945), our members across the country participated in various forms of programmes, including attending the virtual meeting.

The slogan of this international action day (foundation day), this year, was 'dignified life'. When capitalism, especially in the midst of virus pandemic, is robbing people of dignified life, WFTU raised demand for dignified life for workers and for all. What WFTU actually means by its slogan for dignified life? Public and free healthcare for all, improvement of the living standards of workers and pensioners, trade union and democratic rights, end of racism and discrimination, protection of environment, solidarity among workers (and towards workers) and people's freedom to decide in the matter of their present and future, explained WFTU.

Dharna and Demonstration

In front of Head Offices of
AFD, British Biologicals and Himalaya Drugs
Bengaluru, 23rd and 24th November, 2021

Workshop on Labour Codes

KSM & SRA

KSM&SRA organized a workshop on labour codes on 2nd and 3rd October, 2021 at Bangalore. Leadership of ten sub units along with state secretariat members participated in the workshop. On the first day, Pratap Simha, State Working Committee Member of CITU gave detailed presentation on new labour codes. Later, Meenakshi Sundaram, State General Secretary of CITU made elaborate deliberation on the impact of the labour codes upon working class and the on the urgency of organizing an uniform understanding for building up united resistance. H. J. Suresh, Vice President, North District Committee of CITU explained how the appearance of codes continues to encourage the corporations to mount that attacks upon the workers. He called upon for organizing continuous campaign and agitation uniting all sections of workers in combating



the onslaught. On 3rd October, 2021 K. Sunil Kumar, Secretary, FMRAI made visual presentation on farmers struggle in the context of three Farm laws and the on Labour Codes and its impact on the field workers (Sales Promotion Employees). The queries and doubts raised by the participants were patiently explained in the workshop. General Secretary of KSM&SRA B. Chandra Kumar greeted the participating members and appreciated the spirit of the participants who stayed overnight to participate in the two days of workshop first time since Covid 19 lockdown. He urged all the leaders of the sub units to conduct similar workshops at sub unit level for a conveying

the clearer and uniform understanding to all the members and field workers. The adverse impact of senseless digitalization on the sales promotion employees particularly on the pharmaceutical and other industries was uniformly decried by the participants. It was resolved in the workshop that rigorous campaign amongst the health care professionals regarding the hidden agenda behind this aggressive digitalization spree imposed upon the field workers (which also intrudes in the privacy of the health care professionals) will be carried out. The entire workshop was presided over by L.M. Peshwa, President of KSM&SRA.

Working Committee Meeting of FMRAI

Working Committee meeting of FMRAI was held over virtual platform on 9th October, 2021. The meeting was presided over by Ramesh Sundar, President, FMRAI. The meeting adopted condolence resolution and paid homage to the leading functionaries of FMRAI, eminent leaders of the working class movement, the healthcare professionals and the common people who passed away during this period. The meeting observed that the policies of BJP government at centre are seriously undermining the interest of the workers, peasants and the toiling people. The meeting noted with great dismay that the attacks on the working class and the common people is increasing. The government policies have enabled and encouraged the big corporate and the employers to continue their loot. This is harming the interest of the workers, peasants and people of the country very seriously. The Labour codes and Farm legislations

are seriously undermining the interest of the workers and the peasants and they are relentlessly agitating against these anti-worker and anti-peasant laws. Despite that, the Central Government continues to show disrespect to the legitimate democratic opinion and opposition of the people. The labour codes and the rules under these codes seriously curtail the existing legal rights of the field workers. In view of the raging pandemic the attacks of the employers on the jobs and rights of the sales promotion employees has increased manifold. The severity of the attacks has further intensified by the employers taking advantage of the second wave of Covid. In this situation it is decided that all sales promotion employees shall undertake continuous and sustained movement on medicine related and common issues of the people and sales promotion employees with the respective State and Central Government and the employers and shall resort to All India Strike on 19th & 20th January, 2022 on the Common Movement on Demands of fieldworkers and on the unresolved demands with the Government and the employers. The meeting further resolved that industrial action to be

intensified against the atrocities of the employers. It was decided to conduct Dharna and Demonstration by the leadership and victimized field workers of AFD, British Biologicals and Himalaya at Bengaluru on 23rd and 24th November 2021 in front of the respective company's Head Office. Against the heinous attack of the Sanofi management, the bargaining union for this section of Sales Promotion Employees is HAIRC, who have launched intensified struggle against the unfair labour practices of the management. The HAIRC leadership has sought support from FMRAI in their struggle programmes. The working committee meeting decided to give full support to this struggle. The meeting also decided to accomplish the task of membership objective for the year 2021. Santanu Chatterjee, General Secretary, FMRAI placed the discussion agenda and made concluding presentation on overall discussion. Ramesh Sundar presided over the meeting. Eighty-six Working Committee Members attended the meeting. The next Working Committee Meeting will be held with physical presence on 13th and 14th November, 2021 at Kolkata.