

To

The Prime Minister,
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Subject: A complaint with regard to —

- 1) Atrocities by police and criminal elements to crush the year-long peaceful movement of thousands of workers.
- ii) The Madhya Pradesh government, which has crippled labour machinery in the state, thus aiding and abetting the unlawful activities of industrialists.

Sir,

Thousands of workers of Bhilai and Urla industrial belts, who have been employed for as long as 15 years, continue to remain temporary. A mere 5% of the workforce of these areas are permanent, the other 95% are kept temporary in gross violation of The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.

Leave alone a living wage, these workers are deprived even of a fair wage. The average monthly wage is not more than Rs. 600-700, which can barely provide subsistence in these days of ever-increasing inflation.

The workers registered their trade-union in September 1990 and submitted a charter for fulfilment of their long-standing demands. Ever since then severe repression has been unleashed upon them by the industrialists and the state government. At least 1500 workers have been put behind bars under false and fabricated cases during this period. The industrialists have their own 'private armies' which have been mounting brutal attacks on these workers under police protection. There have been attempts on the lives of more

than 100 workers. The police does not arrest the members of these private armies. That is why these criminals freely move around in the workers' colonies terrorising them.

On the other hand the state government is attempting to extort trade-union leaders under various black laws. Thus, the Madhya Pradesh government is openly patronising the industrialists in their unlawful practices.

In the prevailing conditions of severe repression and non-fulfilment of their demands, the workers felt it was essential to meet the highest officials and leaders of the nation and apprise them of the situation. Hence a delegation of 350 workers' representatives held a dharna in front of the office of the Ministry of Labour - Shram Shakti Bhavan, New Delhi on 11th and 12th September 1991. Nine members of the delegation met the President, Shri R.Venkatraman on 11th September and submitted to him a memorandum signed by 50,000 workers. They also submitted a letter to the Bharatiya Janata Party leader, Shri L.K.Advani and discussed with him the sorry state of affairs in Madhya Pradesh.

We request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to take serious note of the Madhya Pradesh government's policy of collusion with the industrialists. In case the M.P. government persists with its exploitative and unconstitutional practices, we urge the Prime Minister that the Madhya Pradesh government be dismissed.

We firmly believe that the dismissal of the Madhya Pradesh government would be welcomed not only by the workers, but also by thousands of adivasis of epidemic-ravaged areas, the suffering oustees of the Narmada Valley and crores of other down-trodden people in the state.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

(JANAK LAL THAKUR)

(SHANKAR GUHA NIYOGI)

13th September, 1991.