

PATWA GOVT. ARRESTS NIYOGITO CRUSH WORKERS' STRUGGLE

In its attempt to crush the workers' movement in Bhilai, the district administration of Durg arrested Chattishgarh Mukti Morcha leader Shankar Guha Niyogi on 4.2.91.

In 1990, workers of 104 industries of the Bhilai Industrial Area got themselves organised into Pragatisheel Cement Shramik Sangh, Pragatisheel Engineering Shramik Sangh and Chattishgarh Chemical Mills Mazdoor Sangh under the leadership of Chattishgarh Mukti Morcha. For the last three months they are agitating for regularisation of contractual workers, for better wages and other facilities.

To crush the struggle, the industrialists of Bhilai resorted to various tactics. Central trade unions namely AITUC, CITU, INTUC etc. oppose the workers' movement and took the industrialists' side. Goons were hired from U.P. and Bihar to break a strike in the Simplex Group of Industries. Six leaders of the workers were stabbed. Even Dr. Devi Das, editor of a local daily, was not spared as he dared to expose some misdeeds of the Simplex owner.

When these terror tactics failed, industrialists sought the help of the administration. More than 800 workers were jailed for varying periods. Leaders were implicated in false cases.

Iron ore miners of Dalli Rajhara are providing economic help to sustain the Bhilai movement. The district administration persuaded the Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies to supersede elected bodies in some workers' co-ops in

हेड आफिस :

कैम्प 9, दिल्ली-राजहरा

जिला दुर्ग (म. प्र.)

४९१-२२८

छत्तीसगढ़

मुक्ति मोर्चा

पत्रांक.....

- 2 -

दिनांक.....

Dalli Rajhara. In one of the large co-ops payment of wages to the workers has been stopped for the last two months. Niyogi's arrest is latest in this series of action.

In a press statement the District Collector of Durg stated that Niyogi had been arrested as some 13 cases are pending against him and as he did not attend the hearings. But the cases are 2 to 5 years old. It is surprising to note that during this period, Niyogi met senior govt. officials (including the Collector) and senior police officers (including the I.G. and The D.I.G.) on several occasions. The question arises that why he was not arrested earlier.

Workers in the districts of Durg, Rajnandgaon, Raipur and Bilaspur are agitating for immediate release of Sri Niyogi. On 5.2.91, textile workers of Rajnandgaon B.N.C. Mills observed strike, miners of Dalli Rajhara staged tools-down strike. Protest rallies are being organised every day in the major industrial towns.

Niyogi's bail petition has been turned down at the Baled subdivisional court. Petition has been filed in the Durg District court. Preparations are going on to move to the High Court at Jabalpur.

8.2.91

Dr. Punya Brata Guna