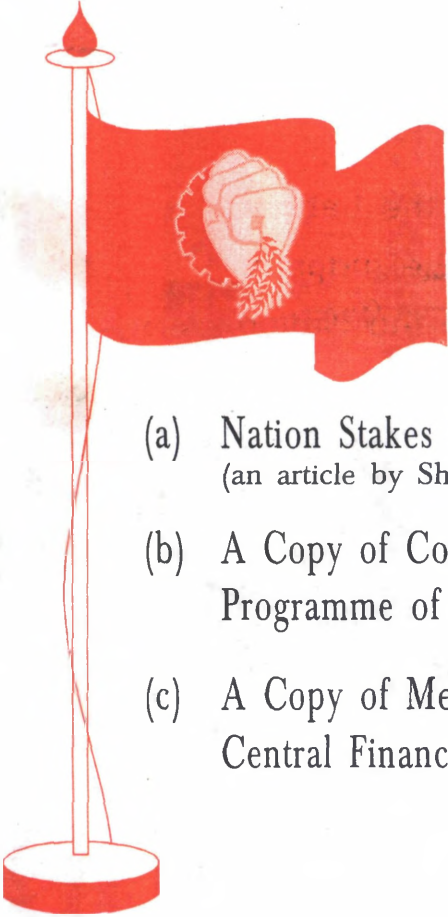




भारतीय मजदूर संघ

BHARATIYA MAZDOOR SANGH



- (a) Nation Stakes
(an article by Shri D. B. Thengadi)
- (b) A Copy of Common Minimum Programme of Congress-led UPA Govt.
- (c) A Copy of Memorandum Submitted to Central Finance Minister

Nationalise the Labour
Labourise the Industry
Industrialise the Nation

First Edition = 3000 copies

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LEST WE FORGET

Initially, it was proposed to publish a handy booklet covering the memorandum submitted to the Central Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram on the eve of pre-budget consultation of 5th of June 04 in New Delhi for information of our karyakartas. Meanwhile it was suggested that another Chapter be added in this booklet covering the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) for governance of Congress led UPA Government at the Centre so that it also remain handy and available to our Karyakartas lest we forget.

Fortunately, at this point of time we came across the Article on CMP by Shri D. B. Thengadi Ji published in Leading National Dailies which we obviously intende to include in the booklet thereby completing our thought process for the above booklet. This Article by Shri Thengadi Ji perpetually charters a course of thought and actions.

There are a few points in submission which were made out only by B.M.S. such as Govt. Employees demands, Public Sector Employees' problems, I.T. exemption: 2 Lacs, and plantation Employees problems.

All these issues have been interlocked in the stitching process of Budget 2004-05.

This small booklet is now in your hands which will provide a yardstick to judge the performance of the UPA Govt. at the Centre and remind us of our points given to the Central Finance Minister. We owe you for errors in compilation and printing but that ought not to matter what matters really is the matter which is rich and of quality.

(Uday Rao Parwardhan)
General Secretary
Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh



Nation stakes

D. B. Thengadi

The CMP of the new government is an acceptance of faults inherent in unrestrained economic reforms. There is now a need to formulate policies keeping the nation topmost in mind

The Common minimum programme of the Congress-led government is virtually an acceptance of error and faults inherent in the unrestrained economic reforms which have been pursued since 1991. Fortunately, the original author of the Indian economic reforms, Manmohan Singh, now the prime minister of the country, has been compelled by the people's mandate to accept the need to revise the policy of economic reforms. However, there is no word against the WTO regime in the CMP.

There is a need to formulate policies keeping the national perspective as a paradigm. Both M.S. Golwalkar and Deendayal Upadhyay emphasized the need to give up the pseudo-ideological division between the 'Right' and the 'Left'. In this context, it is worthwhile to take cognisance of the views expressed by Golwalkar on this subject in his address to the All India Pracharak Meet at Thane on November 2, 1972:

- ★ The basic needs of life must be available to every citizen.
- ★ Material wealth is to be acquired with the object of serving society which is but a manifestation of God in the best possible ethical manner, and out of all that wealth, only the minimum should be used for our own purposes.
- ★ Thus we are only the trustees of the society. It is only when we

become true trustees that we can serve society best.

- ★ Thus, there must be some ceiling on the individual accumulation, and no person has a right to exploit someone else's labour for personal profit.
- ★ Vulgar, ostentatious and wasteful expenditure is a sin when millions are starving. There must be reasonable restriction on all consumption. Consumerism is not compatible with the spirit of Hindu culture.
- ★ 'Maximum production and equitable distribution' should be our motto; national self-reliance our immediate goal.
- ★ The problem of unemployment and under-employment must be tackled on a war footing.
- ★ While industrialization is a must, it need not be the blind imitation of the West. Nature is to be milked and not killed. Ecological factors, balance of nature and the requirements of the future generations should never be lost sight of. There should be an integrated thinking on education, ecology, economics and ethics.
- ★ Greater stress should be laid on the labour-intensive, rather than on capital-intensive, industries.
- ★ Our technologists should be required to introduce for the benefit of the artisans reasonably adaptable changes in the traditional techniques of production, without incurring the risk of increase in unemployment of workers, wastage of the available managerial and technical skills and complete decapitalisation of the existing means of production. We must also evolve our own indigenous technology with emphasis on decentralisation of the process of production with the help of power, making home – instead of the factory – the centre of production.
- ★ It is necessary to reconcile efficiency with employment expansion.
- ★ Labour is also one form of capital in every industry. The labour of every worker should be evaluated in term of share, and workers

raised to the status of shareholders contributing labour as their share.

- ★ Consumers' interest is the nearest economic equivalent of national interest. Society is the third and more important party to all industrial relations. The current western concept of 'collective bargaining' is not consistent with this view. It should be replaced by some other terms, such as 'national commitment', i.e. the commitment of both the employers and the employees to the nation.
- ★ The surplus value of labour belongs to the nation.
- ★ There need not be any rigidity about the pattern of industrial ownership. There are various patterns, such as private enterprise, state ownership, cooperatives, municipal ownership, self-employment, joint ownership (State and private) and democratisation. For each industry, the pattern of ownership should be determined in the light of its peculiar characteristics and the total requirements of the national economy.
- ★ We are free to evolve any variety of socio-economic order, provided it is in keeping with the basic tenets of *dharmā*.
- ★ But changes in the superstructure of society will be of no use if the mind of every individual citizen is not moulded properly. Indeed, the system works ill or well according to the men who work it.
- ★ Our view of the relation between individual and society has always been not one of conflict, but of harmony and cooperation, born out of the consciousness of a single reality running through all the individuals. The individual is a living limb of the corporate social personality.
- ★ The *samskaras* of identification with the entire nation constitute the real infrastructure of any socio-economic order.



Chapter-I

COMMON MINIMUM PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE

27th May, 2004.

Introduction

The people of India have voted decisively in the 14th Lok Sabha elections for secular, progressive forces, for parties wedded to the welfare of farmers, agricultural labour, weavers, workers and weaker sections of society, for parties irrevocably committed to the daily well-being of the common man across the country. In keeping with this mandate, the Congress, its pre-poll allies that include the RJD, DMK, NCP, PMK, TRS, JMM, LJP, MDMK, AIMIM, PDP, IUML, RPI (A), RPI (G) and KC(J) have come together to form a United Progressive Alliance (UPA).

The UPA government **supported by the Left Parties** will have six basic principles for governance:

1. to preserve, protect and promote social harmony and to enforce the law without fear or favour to deal with all obscurantist and fundamentalist elements who seek to disturb social amity and peace.
2. to ensure that the economy grows at least 7-8% per year in a sustained manner over a decade and more and in manner that generates employment so that each family is assured of a safe and viable livelihood.
3. to enhance the welfare and well-being of farmers, farm labour and workers, particularly those in the unorganized sector and assure a secure future for their families in every respect.
4. to fully empower women politically, educationally, economically and legally.
5. to provide for full equality of opportunity, particularly in education and employment for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, OBCs and religious minorities.

6. to unleash the creative energies of our entrepreneurs, businessmen, scientists, engineers and all other professionals and productive forces of society.

The UPA makes a solemn pledge to the people of our country: to provide a government that is corruption-free, transparent and accountable at all times, to provide an administration that is responsible and responsive at all times.

Employment

The UPA government will immediately enact a National Employment Guarantee Act. This will provide a legal guarantee for at least 100 days of employment to begin with on asset-creating public works programmes every year at minimum wages for at least one able-bodied person in every rural, urban poor and lower middle-class household. In the interim, a massive food-for-work programme will be started.

The UPA government will establish a **National Commission** to examine the problems facing enterprises in the unorganized, informal sector. The Commission will be asked to make appropriate recommendations to provide technical, marketing and credit support to these enterprises. A National Fund will be created for this purpose. The UPA administration will revamp the functioning of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) and launch new programmes for the modernization of coir, handlooms, power-looms, garments, rubber, cashew, handicrafts, food processing, sericulture, wool development, leather, pottery and other cottage industries..

The UPA government will give the highest investment, credit and technological priority to the continued growth of agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, floriculture, afforestation, dairying and agro-processing that will significantly add to the creation of new jobs. Along with vastly expanding credit facilities for small-scale industry and self-employment, the UPA government will ensure that the services industry will be given all support to fulfill its true growth and employment potential. This includes software and all IT-enabled services, trade, distribution, transport, telecommunications, finance and tourism. The

textile industry will be enabled to meet new challenges imposed by the abolition of quotas under the international multi-fibre agreement in January 2005. Given its special ecological importance world-wide and within the country, the jute industry will receive a fresh impetus in all respects.

Agriculture

The UPA government will ensure that public investment in agricultural research and extension, rural infrastructure and irrigation is stepped up in a significant manner at the very earliest. Irrigation will receive the highest investment priority and all on-going projects will be completed according to a strict time schedule. The rural cooperative credit system will be nursed back to health. The UPA government will ensure that the flow of rural credit is doubled in the next three years and that the coverage of small and marginal farmers by institutional lending is expanded substantially. The delivery system for rural credit will be reviewed. Immediate steps will be taken to ease the burden of debt and high interest rates on farm loans. Crop and livestock insurance schemes will be made more effective..

The UPA government will introduce a special programme for dry land farming in the arid and semi-arid regions of the country. Watershed and wasteland development programmes will be taken up on a massive scale. Water management in all its aspects, both for irrigation and drinking purposes, will receive urgent attention. The UPA administration will ensure the fullest implementation of **minimum wage laws for farm labour**. Comprehensive protective legislation will be enacted for all agricultural workers. Revenue administration will be thoroughly modernized and clear land titles will be established. The UPA government will bring forward a Constitutional Amendment to ensure the democratic, autonomous and professional functioning of cooperatives. Controls that depress the incomes of farmers will be systematically removed. Farmers will be given greater say in the organizations that supply inputs to them. The UPA government will ensure that adequate protection is provided to all farmers from imports, particularly when international prices fall sharply. The UPA government will ensure that government agencies entrusted with the responsibility

for procurement and marketing will pay special attention to farmers in poor and backward states and districts. Farmers all over the country will receive fair and remunerative prices. The terms of trade will be maintained in favour of agriculture. The UPA government will take steps to ensure that dues to all farmers including sugarcane farmers will be cleared at the earliest.

Education, Health

The UPA government pledges to raise public spending in education to least 6% of GDP with at least half this amount being spent of primary and secondary sectors. This will be done in a phased manner, The UPA government will introduce a cess on all central taxes to finance the commitment to universalize access to quality basic education. A National Commission on Education will be set up to allocate resources and monitor programmes. The UPA government will take immediate steps to reverse the trend of communalization of education that had set in the past five years. It will also ensure that all institutions of higher learning and professional education retain their autonomy. The UPA will ensure that nobody is denied professional education because he or she is poor. Academic excellence and professional competence will be the sole criteria for all appointments to bodies like the Indian Council for Historical Research, Indian Council for Social Science Research, University Grants Commission, National Council for Educational Research and Training, etc. Steps will be taken to remove the communalization of the school syllabus that has taken place in the past five years. A review committee of experts will be set up for this purpose. A national cooked nutritious mid-day meal scheme funded mainly by the central government, will be introduced in primary and secondary schools. An appropriate mechanism for quality checks will also set up. The UPA will also universalize the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme to provide a functional anganwadi in every settlement and ensure full coverage for all children. The UPA government will fully back and support all NGO efforts in the area of primary education.

Proper infrastructure will be created in schools for NCC, NSS, physical development, sports and cultural development of all students. The UPA government will raise public spending on health to at least

2-3% of GDP over the next five years with focus on primary health care. A national scheme for health insurance for poor families will be introduced. The UPA will step up public investment in programmes to control all communicable diseases and also provide leadership to the national AIDS control effort. The UPA government will take all steps to ensure availability of life-savings drugs at reasonable prices. Special attention will be paid to the poorer sections in the matter of health care. The feasibility of reviving public sector units set up for the manufacture of critical bulk drugs will be re-examined so as to bring down and keep a check on prices of drugs.

Women and Children

The UPA government will take the lead to introduce legislation for one-third reservations for women in vidhan sabhas and in the Lok Sabha. Legislation on domestic violence and against gender discrimination will be enacted. The UPA government will ensure that at least one-third of all funds flowing into panchayats will be earmarked for programmes for the development of women and children. Village women and their associations will be encouraged to assume responsibility for ail development schemes relating to drinking water, sanitation, primary education, health and nutrition. Complete legal equality for women in all spheres will be made a practical reality, especially by removing discriminatory legislation and by enacting new legislation that gives women, for instance, equal rights of ownership of assets like houses and land.

The UPA government will bring about a major expansion in schemes for micro-finance based on self-help groups, particularly in the backward and ecologically fragile areas of the country. The UPA government is committed to replicating all over the country the success that some southern and other states have had in family planning. A sharply targeted population control programme will be launched in the 150-odd high-fertility districts. The UPA government recognizes that states that achieve success in family planning cannot be penalized. The UPA government will protect the rights of children, strive for the elimination of child labour, ensure facilities for schooling and extend special care to the girl child.

Food and Nutrition Security

The UPA will work out, in the next three months, a comprehensive medium-term strategy for food and nutrition security. The objective will be to move towards universal food security over time, if found feasible. The UPA government will strengthen the public distribution system (PDS) particularly in the poorest and backward blocks of the country and also involve women's and ex-servicemen's cooperatives in its management. Special schemes to reach food grains to the most destitute and infirm will be launched. Grain banks in chronically food-scarce areas will be established. Antyodaya cards for all households at risk of hunger will be introduced. The UPA government will bring about major improvements in the functioning of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) to control inefficiencies that increase the food subsidy burden. Nutrition programmes, particularly for the girl child will be expanded on a significant scale.

Panchayati Raj

The UPA government will ensure that all funds for poverty alleviation and rural development programmes will be credited directly to panchayat bodies as per the recommendations of the Finance Commission. The terms of reference of the Finance Commission will be formulated suitably. Appropriate guidelines will be prepared in consultation with the state governments for the effective utilization of such funds. Devolution of funds will be accompanied by similar devolution of functions and functionaries as well. Regular elections to panchayat bodies will be ensured and the amended Act in respect of the Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas will be implemented. The UPA government will ensure that the Gram Sabha is empowered to emerge as the foundation of panchayati raj.

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes

The UPA will urge the states to make legislation for conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce, including tendu patta, on all those people from the weaker sections who work in the forests. All reservation quotas, including those relating to promotions, will be fulfilled in a time-bound manner. To codify all reservations, a

Reservation Act will be enacted. The UPA government will launch a comprehensive national programme for minor irrigation of all lands owned by dalits and adivasis. Landless families will be endowed with land through implementation of land ceiling and land redistribution legislation. No reversal of ceilings legislation will be permitted. The UPA administration will take all measures to reconcile the objectives of economic growth and environmental conservation, particularly as far as tribal communities dependent on forests are concerned. The UPA is concerned with the growth of **extremist violence** and other forms of terrorist activity in different states. This is not merely a law-and-order problem, but a far deeper socio-economic issue which will be addressed more meaningfully than has been the case so far. False encounters will not be permitted. The UPA government will immediately review the overall strategy and programmes for the development of tribal areas to plug loopholes and to work out more viable livelihood strategies. In addition, more effective systems of relief and rehabilitation will be put in place for **tribal and other groups displaced** by development projects. Tribal people alienated from land will be rehabilitated. The UPA government is very sensitive to the issue of affirmative action, including reservations, in the private sector. It will immediately initiate a national dialogue with all political parties, industry and other organizations to see how best the private sector can fulfill the aspirations of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe youth. Eviction of tribal communities and other forest-dwelling communities from forest areas will be discontinued. Cooperation of these communities will be sought for protecting forests and for undertaking social afforestation. The rights of tribal communities over mineral resources, water sources, etc as laid down by law will be fully safeguarded..

Social Harmony, Welfare of Minorities

The UPA is committed to the implementation of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1992. On Ayodhya, it will await the verdict of the courts, while encouraging negotiations between parties to the dispute for an amicable settlement which must, in turn, receive legal sanction. The UPA government will enact a model comprehensive law to deal with communal violence and encourage each state to adopt that law to generate faith and confidence in minority communities. The UPA

government will amend the Constitution to establish a Commission for Minority Educational Institutions that will provide direct affiliation for minority professional institutions to central universities. The UPA will promote modern and technical education among all minority communities. Social and economic empowerment of minorities through more systematic attention to education and employment will be a priority concern for the UPA. The UPA will establish a National Commission to see how best the welfare of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities, including reservations in education and employment, is enhanced. The Commission will be given six months to submit its report. Adequate funds will be provided to the National Minorities Development Corporation to ensure its effective functioning. The UPA government will examine the question of providing Constitutional status to the Minorities Commission and will also strive for recognition and promotion of Urdu language under Article 345 and 347 of the Constitution.

Infrastructure

The UPA attaches the highest priority to the development and expansion of physical infrastructure like roads, highways, ports, power, railways, water supply, sewage treatment and sanitation. Public investment in infrastructure will be enhanced, even as the role of the private sector is expanded. Subsidies will be made explicit and provided through the budget. The review of the Electricity Act, 2003 will be undertaken in view of the concern expressed by a number of states. The mandatory date of June 10, 2004 for unbundling and replacing the state electricity boards will be extended. The UPA government also reiterates its commitment to an increased role for private generation of power and more importantly power distribution. The UPA government commits itself to a comprehensive programme of urban renewal and to a massive expansion of social housing in towns and cities, paying particular attention to the needs of slum dwellers. Housing for the weaker sections in rural areas will be expanded on a large scale. Forced eviction and demolition of slums will be stopped and while undertaking urban renewal, care will be taken to see that the urban and semi urban poor are provided housing near their place of occupation. The UPA will pay special attention to augmenting and modernizing rural infrastructure

consisting of roads, irrigation, electrification, cold-chain and marketing outlets. All existing irrigation projects will be completed with three to four years. Household electrification will be completed in five years.

Water Resources

The UPA government will make a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking the rivers of the country starting with the south-bound rivers. This assessment will be done in a fully consultative manner. It will also explore the feasibility of linking sub-basins of rivers in states like Bihar. The UPA *will take all steps to ensure that long-pending inter-state disputes on rivers and water-sharing like the Cauvery Waters dispute are settled amicably at the earliest keeping in mind the interests of all parties to the dispute. To put an end to the acute drinking water shortage in cities, especially in southern states, desalination plants will be installed all along the Coromandel Coast starting with Chennai. Special problems of habitations in hilly terrains will be addressed immediately. Providing drinking water to all sections in urban and rural areas and augmenting availability of drinking water sources is an issue of the topmost priority. Harvesting rain water, desilting existing ponds and other innovative mechanisms will be adopted.

Regional Development, Centre-State Relations

The UPA government is committed to redressing growing regional imbalances both among states as well as within states, through fiscal, administrative, investment and other means. It is a matter of concern that regional imbalances have been accentuated by not just historical neglect but also by distortions in Plan allocations and central government assistance. Even in the Tenth Five Year Plan, states like Bihar, Assam and UP- have received per capita allocations that are much below the national average. The UPA government will consider the creation of a Backward States Grant Fund that will be used to create productive assets in these states. The central government will also take proactive measures to speed up the industrialization of the eastern and north eastern region. A structured and transparent approach to alleviate the burden of debt on states will be adopted at the earliest, so as to enable them to increase social sector investments. Interest rates on loans

to states will be reduced and the share of states in the single, divisible pool of taxes enhanced. All non-statutory resource transfers from the central government will be weighted in favour of poor and backward states but with performance parameters as well. A special programme for social and physical infrastructure development in the poorest and most backward districts of the country will be taken up on a priority basis. The UPA government will take special measures to ensure that regions of India like in the east where the credit: deposit ratio is lagging, is improved substantially. The UPA government will review the issue of payment of royalties to states in the area of minerals. From time to time, previous governments have announced special economic packages as, for example, for the northeast, for Bihar and for J&K. For Bihar, Shri Rajiv Gandhi had announced a special development package in 1989 and subsequently another package was announced at the time of its division in 1999 to make up for the loss of revenue. These packages will be implemented expeditiously. The UPA government will make the National Development Council (NDC) a more effective instrument of cooperative federalism. The NDC will meet at least twice a year and in different states. Immediately, the NDC will take up the issue of the financial health of states and arrive at a national consensus on specific steps to be taken in this regard. The Inter-State Council will also be activated. All centrally-sponsored schemes except in national priority areas like family planning will be transferred to states. The UPA government will consider the demand for the formation of a **Telangana state** at an appropriate time after due consultations and consensus. The Sarkaria Commission had last looked at the issue of Centre-State relations over two decades ago. The UPA government will set up a new Commission for this purpose keeping in view the sea-changes that have taken place in the polity and economy of India since then. Long-pending schemes in specific states that have national significance, like the Sethu Samuthairam project, flood control and drainage in North Bihar (that requires cooperation with Nepal as well) and Prevention of Erosion in Padma-Ganga and Bhagirathi flood control in West Bengal will be completed expeditiously. A Flood-prone Area Development Programme will be started and the central government will fully support flood control works in inter-state and international rivers. All existing schemes for drought-prone area development will be reviewed and a single major national programme launched.

Jammu and Kashmir, Northeast

The UPA government is pledged to respecting the letter and spirit of Article 370 of the Constitution that accords a special status to J&K. Dialogue with all groups and with different shades of opinion in J&K will be pursued on a sustained basis, in consultation with the democratically-elected state government. The healing touch policy pursued by the state government will be fully supported and an economic and humanitarian thrust provided to it. The state will be given every assistance to rebuild its infrastructure quickly. New efforts will be launched to bring investments in areas like power, tourism, handicrafts and sericulture. The UPA government is determined to tackle terrorism, militancy and insurgency in the northeast as a matter of urgent national priority. All north eastern states will be given special assistance to upgrade and expand infrastructure. The North-eastern Council will be strengthened and given adequate professional support. The territorial integrity of existing states will be maintained.

Administrative Reforms

The UPA will set up an Administrative Reforms Commission to prepare a detailed blueprint for revamping the public administration system. E-governance will be promoted on a massive scale. The Right to Information Act will be made more progressive, participatory and meaningful. The Lok Pal Bill will be enacted into law. The UPA government will take the leadership role to drastically cut delays in High Courts and lower levels of the judiciary. Legal aid services will be expanded. Judicial reforms will be given a fresh momentum. As part of its commitment to electoral reforms, the UPA will initiate steps to introduce state funding of elections at the earliest.

Industry

The UPA will take all necessary steps to revive industrial growth and put it on a robust footing, through a range of policies including deregulation, where necessary Incentives to boost private investment will be introduced. FDI will continue to be encouraged and actively sought particularly in areas of infrastructure, high-technology and exports and where local assets and employment are created on a significant scale.

The country needs and can easily absorb at least two to three times the present level of FDI inflows. Indian industry will be given every support to become productive and competitive. All regulatory institutions will be strengthened to ensure that competition is free and fair. These institutions will be run professionally. The UPA government will set up a National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council to provide a continuing forum for policy dialogue to energise and sustain the growth of manufacturing industry like food processing, textiles and garments, engineering, consumer goods, pharmaceuticals, capital goods, leather, and IT hardware. Household and artisanal manufacturing will be given greater technological, investment and marketing support. In the past few years, the most employment-intensive segment of small-scale industry (SSI) has suffered extensively. A major promotional package for the SSI sector will be announced soon. It will be freed from the Inspector Raj and given full credit, technological and marketing support. Infrastructure up-gradation in major industrial clusters will receive urgent attention. Competition in the financial sector will be expanded. Public sector banks will be given full managerial autonomy. Interest rates will provide incentives both to investors and savers, particularly pensioners and senior citizens. The UPA government will never take decisions on the Employers Provident Fund (EPF) without consultations with and approval of the EPF Board. Regulation of urban cooperative banks in particular and of banks in general will be made more effective. LIC and GIC will continue to be in the public sector and will continue to play their social role. In addition, the social obligations imposed by regulatory bodies on private banks and private insurance companies will be monitored and enforced strictly.

Labour

The UPA government is firmly committed to ensure the welfare and well-being of all workers, particularly those in the unorganized sector who constitute 93% of our workforce. Social security, health insurance and other schemes for such workers like weavers, handloom workers, fishermen and fisherwomen, toddy tappers, leather workers, plantation labour, beedi workers, etc will be expanded. The UPA rejects the idea of automatic hire and fire. It recognizes that some changes in labour laws may be required but such changes must fully protect the

interests of workers and families and must take place after full consultation with trade unions. The UPA will pursue a dialogue with industry and trade unions on this issue before coming up with specific proposals. However, labour laws other than the Industrial Disputes Act that create an Inspector Raj will be re-examined and procedures harmonized and streamlined. The UPA government firmly believes that labour-management relations in our country must be marked by consultations, cooperation and consensus, not confrontation. Tripartite consultations with trade unions and industry on all proposals concerning them will be actively pursued. Rights and benefits earned by workers, including the right to strike according to law, will not be taken away or curtailed.

Public sector

The UPA government is committed to a strong and effective public sector whose social objectives are met by its commercial functioning. But for this, there is need for selectivity and a strategic focus. The UPA is pledged to devolve full managerial and commercial autonomy to successful, profit-making companies operating in a competitive environment. Generally profit-making companies will not be privatized. All privatizations will be considered on a transparent and consultative case-by-case basis. The UPA will retain existing “navaratna” companies in the public sector while these companies raise resources from the capital market. While every effort will be made to modernize and restructure sick public sector companies and revive sick industry, chronically loss-making companies will either be sold-off, or closed, after ail workers have got their legitimate dues and compensation. The UPA will induct private industry to turn-around companies that have potential for revival. The UPA government believes that privatization should increase competition, not decrease it. It will not support the emergence of any monopoly that only restrict competition. It also believes that there must be a direct link between privatization and social needs—like, for example, the use of privatization revenues for designated social sector schemes. Public sector companies and nationalized banks will be encouraged to enter the capital market to raise resources and offer new investment avenues to retail investors.

Fiscal Policy

The UPA government commits itself to eliminating the revenue deficit of the centre by 2009, so as to release more resources for investments in social and physical infrastructure. All subsidies will be targeted sharply at the poor and the truly needy like small and marginal farmers, farm labour and the urban poor.. A detailed roadmap for accomplishing this will be unveiled in Parliament within 90 days. The UPA government will not cut deficits by reducing or curtailing growth of investment and development outlays. The UPA government is pledged to the early introduction of VAT after all the necessary technical and administrative homework has been completed, particularly on issues like the integration of service sector taxation and compensation to states. It will initiate measures to increase the tax: GDP ratio by undertaking major tax reforms that expand the base of taxpayers, increase tax compliance and make the tax administration more efficient. Tax rates will be stable and conducive to growth, compliance and investment. Special schemes to unearth black money and assets will be introduced. The UPA government will take effective and strong measures to control the price hike of essential commodities. Provisions to deal with speculators, hoarders and black- marketeers under the Essential Commodities Act will not be diluted in any way.

Capital Markets

The UPA government is deeply committed, through tax and other policies, to the orderly development and functioning of capital markets that reflect the true fundamentals of the economy. Financial markets will be deepened. FIIs will continue to be encouraged while the vulnerability of the financial system to the flow of speculative capital will be reduced. Misuse of double taxation agreements will be stopped. Interests of small investors will be protected and they will be given new avenues for safe investment of their savings. SEBI will be further strengthened. Strictest action will be taken against market manipulators and those who try to deliberately engineer market panic,

Economic Reforms

The UPA reiterates its abiding commitment to economic reforms with a human face, that stimulates growth, investment and

employment. Further reforms are needed and will be carried out in agriculture, industry and services. The UPA's economic reforms will be oriented primarily to spreading and deepening rural prosperity, to significantly improving the quality of public systems and delivery of public services, to bringing about a visible and tangible difference in the (quality of life of ordinary citizens of our country.

Defence, Internal Security

The UPA government will ensure that all delays in the modernization of the armed forces are eliminated and that all funds earmarked for modernization are spent fully at the earliest. The UPA will set up a new Department of Ex-Servicemens' Welfare in the Ministry of Defence. The long pending issue of one-rank, one-pension will be re-examined. The UPA government will make the National Security Council a professional and effective institution. The UPA government is committed to maintaining a credible nuclear weapons programme while at the same time it will evolve demonstrable and verifiable confidence-building measures with its nuclear neighbours. It will take a leadership role in promoting universal, nuclear disarmament and working for a nuclear weapons-free world. The UPA has been concerned with the manner in which POTA has been grossly misused in the past two years. There will be no compromise in the fight against terrorism. But given the abuse of POTA that has taken place, the UPA government will repeal it, while existing laws are enforced strictly. The UPA government will take the strictest possible action, without fear or favour, against all those individuals and organizations who spread social discord, disturb social amity, propagate religious bigotry and communal hatred. The law of the land will be enforced effectively.

Science and Technology

The UPA government will follow policies and introduce programmes that strengthen India's vast science and technology infrastructure. Science and technology development and application missions will be launched in key areas, covering both global leadership and local transformation. The UPA government will mobilize the skills and expertise of Indian scientists, technologists and other professionals working abroad for institution-building and other projects in the country.

Energy Security

The UPA government will immediately put in place policies to enhance the country's energy security particularly in the area of oil. Overseas investments in the hydrocarbon industry will be actively encouraged. An integrated energy policy linked with sustainable development will be put in place.

Foreign Policy, International Organisations

The UPA government will pursue an independent foreign policy keeping in mind its past traditions. This policy will seek to promote multi-polarity in world relations and oppose all attempts at unilateralism. The UPA government will give the highest priority to building closer political, economic and other ties with its neighbours in South Asia and to strengthening SAARC. Particular attention will be paid to regional projects in the area of water resources, power and ecological conservation. Dialogue with Pakistan on all issues will be pursued systematically and on a sustained basis. The UPA will support peace talks in Sri Lanka that fulfill the legitimate aspirations of Tamils and religious minorities within the territorial integrity and solidarity of Sri Lanka. Outstanding issues with Bangladesh will be resolved. Trade and investment with China will be expanded further and talks on the border issue pursued seriously. Relationships with East Asian countries will be intensified. Traditional ties with West Asia will be given a fresh thrust. The UPA government reiterates India's decades-old commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own. Steps will be taken to withdraw Indian mercenaries from Iraq while further recruitment for this purpose will be banned. Even as it pursues closer engagement and relations with the USA, the UPA government will maintain the independence of India's foreign policy position on all regional and global issues. The UPA is committed to deepening ties with Russia and Europe as well. In keeping with the stance adopted by the late Shri Murasoli Maran at Doha, the UPA government will fully protect the national interest, particularly of farmers, in all WTO negotiations. Commitments made earlier will be adhered to, even as efforts are mounted to ensure that all agreements reflect our concerns fully particularly in the area of intellectual property and agriculture. The UPA

government will use the flexibility afforded in existing WTO agreements to fully protect Indian agriculture and industry. The UPA government will play a proactive role in strengthening the emerging solidarity of developing countries in the shape of G-20 in the WTO.

Official Language

The UPA government will set up a committee to examine the question of declaring all languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as official languages. In addition, Tamil will be declared as a classical language.

A Final Word

This is a common minimum programme (CMP) for the UPA government. It is, by no means, a comprehensive agenda. It is a starting point that highlights the main priorities, policies and programmes. The UPA is committed to the implementation of the CMP. This CMP is the foundation for another CMP—collective maximum performance.

Chapter-II

To

Shri P. Chidambaram Ji,
Hon'ble Finance Minister,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

Sub : Pre-Budget discussion scheduled on 05-06-2004.

Ref : D. O. No. E-10 (2) Ec. Dr. / 2004 dt, 27th May, 2004

1. First of all please accept our greetings on assumption of charge of Ministry of Finance in the Central Govt.
2. At the outset I would like to thank you for extending invitation to B.M.S. for pre-budget consultations on 05 Jun 04. We have the following points for your kind consideration:-
 - (I) We thank the UPA Govt for making announcement in the Common Minimum programme that Govt will not disinvest the PSUs running in profit. Your interview with newspapers say that you are investment Minister and not the disinvestment Minister we appreciate the stand taken by you. Now we want Govt to make this a budgetary commitment.
 - (II) **The Central Govt Employees' problems.**
 - (A) The new entrant Central Govt Employees now will be given a low grade treatment since their pension will be governed by distinct set

of rules. We want Govt to end this discrimination.

- (B) Besides the 5th Pay Commission which promised the Govt Employees that the next Commission would be set up well before the term and new set of wages and benefits would come into being at end of next year. This warrants announcement of 6th Pay Commission in the forthcoming budget. We request you to do it. Sir we wish you to take care and ensure that no strings and preconditions are clamped while doing so. There are speculations that the pension will be targeted.

(III) The issues of Central PSUs

For Central PSUs the Deptt of Public undertakings is issuing guide lines. Since last 15 Years or so, the PSUs have fought successfully the Forces of globalisation and have started earning good profits. Their over all performance also is encouraging. As such Employees who have performed despite the hanging Sword of uncertainty, on their heads must be rewarded. They are doing well and are in a position to demand their due share in prosperity. Here we experience that DPE became stumbling block for such workers to gain more. Every such time workmen would be helpless before adamant DPE. We therefore want clear cut guidelines in the present budget as to how Govt sorts out the problem. We do not want DPE interference. With such assurance from Govt the PSU Employees will naturally have their mind set focussed accordingly. Their wage offensives are expected to begin from next year end.

The promise of security and help to ailing PSUs from CMP blended with doing away the interference of DPE. The Employees for first time may have a smile on their face.

(IV) The problems of Employees of Financial Sector.

- (A) The Employees in Nationalised Banking Sector have not yet been able to get the Wage revision only on account of stumbling blocks created by unwarranted instance on mobility by IBA. Though the issue was successfully resolved at 7th Bipartite, again IBA wanted this to be agreed upon as preconditional 8th bipartile.

This is amazing how inefficient bankers squandered the powers

bestowed upon them by virtue of commitment made at 7th bipartite now again harp up on the issue. Evolving a straight Jacket formula on National level is complex, unscientific besides it has power to cause great hardship to Employees.

- (B) We wish to press our demand that the Govt direct IBA to sign settlement strictly on merit of Finance position leaving other issues to be sorted out at Individual Bank level, without placing any precondition.
- (C) This epidemic also has traversed a distance down the line. Now LIC/GIC managements also are pressing for mobility and are using this as a bogey to delay the discussions.
- (D) Now since UPA Govt is firm in saddle, this budget should give clear signal to these Employees that the Govt does not intend to harass them. We demand for an express policy announcement in the budget on lines as demanded.

The new height of prosperity gained by the Insurance giants is result of wonderful culture of cooperation created by Workmen there. Instead of rewarding them a handsome wage revision, if they are forced with a transfer will it be a reward ?

We demand a clear guide line to signal justice and reward to Employees.

The problems of Service Conditions.

- (A) There has been an attempt from vested interests to give a bye to chapter V (B) of I.D. Act 1947. This causes great hardship in matters of closures and retrenchment to Labour. All CTUs are unanimous in as much as retaining the legal protection under Chapter V-B is concerned.
- (B) There has been another topic of 'hire-fire' also in debate. MC Kinseys have also stated clearly that these legal change sought after do not contribute much to GDP growth as relatively small sector is under preview. We also have noted some streaks in press statement of Hon'ble F.M. that legal set up has not been the stumbling block.

- (C) We appreciate and urge upon the UPA Govt to protect the legal rights of workmen. We therefore demand that unless there is consensus among the social partners there should come no change.
- (D) However a comprehensive legislation for Agriculture Labour, an Umbrella registration for un-organised workers and a comprehensive legislation for Social Security are some such issues on which there has been general consensus already arrived at. We demand a clear scheme of thing to be spelt out in the forth coming budget. The Welfare schemes need Central Financial assistance/budgetary support. Govt needs to invest in this Welfare sector.
- (E) The participation of Labour in the Management is another distinct issue where there was some favourable signal from Employers in 37th session of Indian Labour Conference. We also demand Govt to bring in this legislation, immediately.
- (F) The contract Labour abolition and regulation now need a change. The rampant use of contract labour in production activities and in such core activities in Industry must be stopped with stern action and also the Regulation needs same kind of Vigour. Low wages, insecurity in service, absence of Social Security are such elements which need to be done away with.
- (G) The new generation jobs of call Centres and BPOs and jobs in I.T. and jobs in new generation private sector Banks, the service conditions in EPZs and Special Zones without any restriction of labour laws are all deviation carved out to exploit labour. Working hours without limit, absence of weekly holidays and leave are some such evil that are clamped on heads of job seekers in markets under the name of work culture and work environment. We need to pay attention towards regularisation. We oppose any and every kind of exploitation of workers, engineers, executives and Officers. Let us not build and allow any body to build prosperity on sacrifice of working people. We demand that Govt should act so as to stop the exploitation.

Employees provident fund contribution must regain to 12% rate.

The CTUs are demanding consistently that P.F. rates should be revised to 12% level.

B.M.S. is confident that this can be done provided Govt shows inclination. We want experts from B.M.S. to be invited for in depth dialogue before making any amends in the current rate of E.P.F.

Problems of sick Industries / Agriculture

(A) It is said that there are more than four lac sick industrial units. This is a staggering figure. We expect the Govt to come out with a scheme to revive the industry of our country through this budget. This is outcome of globalisation.

This has caused virtual stand still in the job creation and there has been decline in Govt / Semi-Govt Sector.

(B) If corporate sector again makes the growth engine of economy then jobs should also come from this sector. We submit that for health of economy, corporate sector must progress. But from point of job creation fresh thought should be given.

(C) We propose that the retail markets should not be opened to the foreign MNCs. We demand doing away of Foreign brands and MNC from the consumer markets in general and from consumer non-durable/Wage goods in particular. They are ruining the Indian Industry.

(D) We demand that Govt should raise tariff rates on all those imports of Industrial products and raw material which are produced with labour saving technology compared to that used in similar industry in India. This will ensure level playing field. The Agro and Agri products exported to India by obtaining subsidy in cash or kind should also be clamped with heavy tariff.

On both types of imports a dumping duty also should be levied.

(E) If 2005 round of Ministerial meet of WTO does not concede to the demands of developing countries then, we demand, that India should prepare to leave the American dominated WTO and create WTO of like minded nations including developing countries from Africa and Latin America.

- (F) On domestic front, on account of international arm twisting policies of buying rich countries and under-cutting competition from developing countries, the agro products like tea, coffee and rubber were in shambles. The tea industry in Kerala, T.N., West Bengal and Assam and Central support with which they can stables.
- (G) The sick sugar Industry needs a package in U.P., Maharashtra etc. which also could come to aid in procuring power and power alcohol. They provide employment on large scale in rural areas and can make a turn around if planned them properly.
- (H) The sick Jute Industry in W.B. and textile industry country wide is checking for want of funds. The budget should go to extend helping hand to them. Once they get a go at, there is no looking back. Trade Unions and workers assure the Govt their whole hearted cooperation in this and aroma. We demand a tripartite Committee for this purpose.
- (I) The Beedi Industry is getting strangulated for want of support from economy. It is an uneven competition with machine made mini cigarettes. Lacs of workers from across the country are losers. They have again fallen back to the dark pits where there is no ray of hope. The need is to deal with the problem of getting phased out, in more human and calibrated way. We demand that CESS collected by Govt by clamping additional sales tax on Cigarettee may be transferred to the kitty of Welfare fund of Beedi workers. This may help them buy social security till it is arranged by UPA Govt as promised.
- (J) Those of industries which have gone sick or which were wrongfully disinvested and have fallen prey to extraction and exploitation also should get a change to establish status quo. Because of privatisation IPCL, BALCO Modern Food and ITDC etc all are in trouble. The workers are systematically done in. In all such cases in general and IPCL, BALCO and ITDC in particular Govt should cancel the MOU and set up an enquiry Cell in all such cases and take correcting measure.

We demand a clear announcement on all these issues in the budget under consideration. The forces of privatisation in bureau-

crazy are suspected to bring back the issue of privatisation of defence production, which Unions have stalled hither to. We want this budget gives full stop to these speculations.

ISSUES IN PIPELINE BILLS PENDING BEFORE PARLIAMENT.

1. The coal Bill 2000 is pending before parliament planning to take coal industry to slaughter house. We demand scrapping of the bill.
2. The Electricity Act 2003 should be scrapped. The State Govt's should be directed not to debundle the State Electricity Boards henceforth. Those which have been so debundled should be directed to submit their performance report. Report on employees' protection also should be taken.
3. The N. K. Singh Committee report on regulatory authority's terms of reference is pending with Govt. We demand that all social partners be consulted before finalising these terms.
4. The Rakesh Mohan Committee Recommendation on Railway privatisation should be scrapped.
5. The N. K. Singh recommendation on FDI be scrapped.
6. The Report of Geetha Krishnan Committee on Postal services recommends introduction of contract system. This must be stopped.
7. The issue of merger of Rural Banks also is in hot debate in Finance Ministry. We oppose any such move to change the structure, in this manner. Instead we demand creation of "National Rural Bank" and we demand this unified structure be given work of rural credit and finance.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND CHOICE OF TECHNOLOGY.

We demand a round table conference of all economic concerns in order to strike balance of various production/services activities in urban/rural economy, which will pave way to a matrix of production vis-a-vis, Job creation in any given sphere.

For any Indian or foreigner this will work as a broad frame far activity and naturally will also govern the Indian interests vis-a-vis global commitments in trade, commerce, Industry and Agriculture.

We wish the Govt to give shape to their policies of job creation, keeping this in view.

We opine that choice of low level of technology in corporate sector and use of technology on need based minimum bases in small, medium and rural sector shall retain potential of Indian economy to creat jobs. We demand that meanwhile the upgradation of technology should be stalled. Govt must come out with employment policy, as a part of the budget for 2004-2005.

The National high way work of Golden Quadrilateral is creating jobs. But there machines are consuming 75% of budget. We want this order to be changed by allowing men/animal power to take 75% and machines 25%. The experts say this is possible, so we demand.

The common minimum programme of UPA Govt speaks of Employment guarantee scheme, on all India level. But the Pioneer State of Maharashtra has had experience of EGS. It simply has failed to creat perpetual resources of production/services.

We therefore suggest that the hunt for alternate fuel be linked with EGS. A massive plantation scheme under EGS of to Oil scads like Jatropha, Neena, Karanja etc. could keep the productive resources alive. The massive drive of plantation also should accomodate medicinal herbs, plants and trees.

INCOME TAX

1. We demand the personal Income Tax to be exempted from Income, upto Rs. 2 lacs per annum and do away with returns for salaried employees in case of no refund.
2. We also demand that I.Tax on perquisite may be withdrawn.
3. We demand the provision of I.T. Act clamping the filing of return on trade unions be scrapped since trade unions are already beyond the clutches of I.Tax.

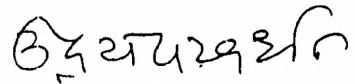
MENACE OF SECURITISATION ACT ON WORKERS.

The recovery procedure under this act does not take care of workers and their dues.

We demand appropriate amendment in Act to place workers dues on top of recovery bill like revenue recovery. At least but not the least, as a non political Central Trade Union we extend our hand of Cooperation to the Govt in their effort to help and protect poor and down trodden Labour. We wish you good luck.

With Greetings.

Yours Sincerely



Uday Rao Patwardhan
General Secretary,
Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh

वन्दे मातरम्

वन्दे मातरम् ।

सुजलां सुफलां मलयजशीतलां ।

शस्य श्यामलां, मातरम् ॥

शुभ्र—ज्योत्सनां पुलकितयामिनी,

फुल्ल—कुसुमित—द्रुमदल—शोभिनी,

सुहासिनीं सुमुध्र भाषिणीं

सुखदां वरदां मातरम् ।

कोटि—कोटि कंठ—

कलकल—निनाद—कराले

कोटि—कोटि भुजैर्दृत्तखरकरवाले,

अबला केनो माँ एतो बले

बहुबल धरिणीं, नमामि तारिणीं

रिपुदलवारिणीं, मातरम् ।

तुमि विद्या, तुमि धर्म ।

तुमि हृदि तुमि मर्म,

त्वं हि प्राणाः शरीरे ।

बाहुते तुमि माँ शक्ति,

हृदये तुमि माँ भक्ति,

तोमारइ प्रतिमा गडि

मन्दिरे मन्दिर ।

त्वं हि दुर्गा, दशप्रहरण—धरिणीं

कमला कमल—दल—विहारिणीं,

वाणी विद्या—दायिनी नमामि त्वां

नमामि कमलां, अमलां, अतुलां,

सुजलां, सुफलां, मातरम् ।

श्यामलां, सरलां, सुस्मितां, भूषितां

धरणीं, भरणीं मातरम् । वन्दे मातरम् ॥