

Amrit Nahata, (Rajasthan)

Born on 26th April 1927 and since then been in Jodhpur. Entered into politics via student movement – came from a will-to-do family – was active in 1942 movement as a student – got associated with the CPI and TU and other movements a little later - was very active in the Praja Mandal (Lok Mandal i.e. State People's Conference) – was active in the long railway strike of 1946 or 47 – a particular incident of this strike, according to his memory, was that it included the Birthday of Maharaja of Jodhpur. On that day, a large number of railway workers went to the Fort to especially pay their respects to the Maharaja; this was at a time when the strike was in full swing – Radha Krishna Vohra or “Tat Saheb” was among the important leaders – there about 10,000 workers in stone quarries, construction and railways combined – “Kamtha” or construction workers were particularly important in Jodhpur, as the houses were at that time almost all of stones; rarely were bricks used; only now RCC is being used – Kamtha Mazdoor Union was among the important organisations in 1945 and later – caste played an important role in workers' movement and organisations; for example, most of the railway workers and leaders Pushkarna Brahmins, construction and stone workers were “Malis” e.g. Gehlots etc. Rawats also constituted construction workers, skills workers generally came from the Muslims – Jodhpur Power House and electricity workers were an important segment – there were even some armed forces officers e.g. an air force pilot and engineer left their jobs and joined the TU movements – Nurses and compounders' Association, formed in 1946-47, was an important organisation – they went on strike at that time – that was the only occasion when firing took place, although it was only an air firing; it was a successful movement – CPI, Lok Parishad and TU movements closely related – no effect of 1948-49 calls – AITUC dominated TU movements – the working class in Jodhpur is decentralized due to the decentralised nature of the industries.