

Interview Summary & Biographical Sketch

Name:- R.D. Tripathi, INTUC, Engineering & Iron & Steel etc. MP.

Date:- June 15, 2003.

Time:- 10.30 am to 1.15 pm in afternoon.

Venue:- Bhopal, his residence.

Interviewer:- Bobby Poulouse

Context:- R.D. Tripathiji is a wonderfully religious man which you can see as soon as you enter his house. He is in true Congress mould, is deeply influenced by Mrs. Gandhi.

And a cheerful person.

Summary of Interview

Tripatiji name he said was Rishab Deo Tripathi and he was born in Rewa on 25th September 1941. His father was a doctor and mother a housewife. His attraction to politics came from his brother who a member of the SYS i.e. Lohia follower. From then on began his interest in politics and so he became the president of his high school. But he couldn't finish high school. An ITI was newly opened nearby in those days and Tripatiji joined it. But there also after training in he led an agitation to get all the students placement. That struggle he said got the support of Shakir Ali those days an MLA from the CPF. So he got his placement in BHEL. On 6th Nov. 1960 BHEL was inaugurated by Nehru. At BHEL there was an independent union, but Tripatiji did not join INTUC then and he along with others formed an independent union. It was called Heavy Electrical Servants Union (HESU) and he was its Vice President. From 15th May 1961 to 31st May 1961 there was a strike on certain wage issues and S.M. Banerjee the CPI MP and trade unionist from Kanpur came and supported the strike and the demands were accepted. Tripatiji's union was also involved along with the INTUC union in this strike. Then came the famous 1962 government employees strike in which Tripatiji also got involved with his union and was arrested and later released. The strike was crushed as many were dismissed and the demands were not met by Nehru. Then came China war and all trade union activity stopped. Next he said came the 17th Feb 1964 government employees all-India strike and again Tripatiji was involved and was arrested and released only in November 1964. He was terminated and got his job back only after four years in 1967. In between he said he struggled a lot. In 1967 they had gheraoed the CMD of BHEL then only they gave back the job. It was a long struggle for many for reinstatement. In 1969 January 29 again there was a struggle in BHEL and this time there was firing and he was again suspended. They were fighting for the demands of the artisans. The 6000 artisans were his followers and they observed a tool-down strike. It was only in 1974 that he joined INTUC. After that Tripatiji became the main leader of BHEL from then on as INTUC is the recognized union there. From then on he has led many struggles on wage issues, housing issues, and many other benefits for the BHEL worker. In fact he said that he also organised the employees and forced the management to give land for BHEL workers so that they could build permanent homes. In fact he said the house in which we were interviewing him was a product of that struggle and BHEL employees have got the best

plots to build their own houses post-retirement. Apart from BHEL whose national leader he became, Tripatiji is also leader of the HEMTU union i.e. heavy machines unit. In 1977 his union lost recognition in BHEL due to secret ballot. But still it is a force in BHEL, Bhopal and other units in MP. In 1983 said Tripatiji Mrs. Gandhi gave a big boost to BHEL by giving it orders and thus making it a premier producer of heavy machines in India. He was also General Secretary of the Indian Mine Workers Federation during the time the famous Bailadila struggle took place against the sale of 1 IB mine to Mittals by the Narsimha Rao govt. Tripatiji took the side of the workers going against his own Congress govt. along with AITUC in the federation and feels happy that such a treasure was kept in public hands and not sold to private hands . Also he is associated with the Diamond mines in MP. **R.D.** Tripati is man focused on engineering sector and mines ai\$ apart from that he is General Secretary of INTUC state unit of MP and is a powerful trade union leader in MP more so because his government is there.

R.D. Tripathi - Bio Sketches

Rishab Deo Tripathi was born in Rewa on 25th September 1941. He got into politics due to influence of his brother who was in SYS with Lohia. He did ITI from Bhopal and there also he launched an agitation to get good placement for all and succeeded. He got a job in BHEL at Bhopal. On joining BHEL he formed an independent union in 1961 and was part and even led many struggles for betterment of conditions of workers of BHEL. He had great hold among artisans at BHEL. He was involved in 1962 all-India govt. employees strike, and then also 1964 all-India strike. After the 1962 strike he got terminated and got his job back only after four years in 1967. In 1969 he led a tool down strike of 6000 artisan workers of BHEL. He was also involved as general secretary of IMWF in the Bailadila struggle against sale of 11B iron ore mine. He is Gen-Sec of MP state INTUC and involved in many other industries also as a state level leader.