

Workers' strikes engulf former Soviet republics

MOSCOW, Feb 16: A wave of strikes has engulfed Russia and other former Soviet Republics where workers, taking their cue from the demise of 'shock therapy' reforms, are stepping up demands for back pay and better conditions, reports AFP.

The latest move came Tuesday in Belarus, where the main opposition party, the Popular Front, not only called for a general strike over working conditions, but demanded the resignation of the new government and parliament dominated by communist hardliners.

Workers have increasingly taken their disgust over the social and economic upheaval unleashed by the collapse of communism into the workplace as authorities appeared unable to do more than offer promises to try to persuade workers to ride out the worst months.

But the latest surge in demands followed the tug-of-war in Moscow between radical reformers behind Russian President Boris Yeltsin and conservatives.

The former's beating in December elections allowed Russian Prime Minister Viktor

Chernomyrdin to bring in a team willing to bury radical free market reforms while promising to step in to support loss-making state industries.

Suddenly in Russia, miners, lumber industry, ambulance drivers, journalists and teachers rose up to press the government and Duma, the lower house of parliament, to urgently adopt some of the measures promised in the build-up to the December 12 poll — though the Duma has given priority to debating the conflict in Bosnia.

Russian coalminers, for one, were given a solemn pledge by the Moscow leadership that they would get back pay.

In Vorkuta in the far north, miners who walked out on February 9 got back pay for November and December on Monday, prompting them to suspend their strike until March 1.

But they warned it was the government's last chance and if January wages and other demands were not met they would again walk off the job, newspaper reports said.

Elsewhere, coalminers in Partizansk in the far east continued a four day-old strike

Tuesday to demand December's pay, ITAR-Tass News Agency said.

Similar work stoppages were also hitting the Kuzbass mines in Siberia, while miners in Rostov-On-Don in Russia's southwest threatened to walk off the job if they are not paid soon, Russian Television reported.

Workers in the lumber and paper industries meanwhile announced they would stop work on February 21 to demand back pay, the Nezavissimaya Gazeta reported.

This followed a warning strike last week by professors at colleges in St Petersburg.

Journalists, also hit in the economic crunch, suspended a strike last week after Chernomyrdin announced he would pay out 80 billion roubles (50 million dollars) they were owed in back wages, while Moscow ambulance drivers announced Monday plans for a partial strike from March 1 to demand reorganization of their age in and de-credit services.

Outside Russia, miners in Karaganda, Kazakhstan and Donetsk in the Ukraine have been on strike for the last few weeks, pressing for similar demands.

IMF seeks cut in Russia's inflation rate

WASHINGTON, Feb 16: Russia's first priority should be reducing its inflation, said IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus yesterday, reports AFP.

Camdessus said inflation climbed to 22 per cent in January because of a "lack of consistent fiscal and monetary discipline."

Further IMF aid would depend on Moscow's ability to speed up the stabilization and reform process, he said.

"We fervently hope to reach agreement on programme," he said at a European institute seminar on Eastern European economies.

He rejected criticism that Western aid to Russia was insufficient, saying it totalled 58 billion dollars in 1992 and 1993.

However, he admitted that the first IMF aid instalment would only total 10 dollars for each inhabitant, compared to 6,000 dollars a head provided by Germany to the former East Germany.

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China has 100m poor

BEIJING, Feb 16: Deng Xiaoping's China may now has a host of millionaires but it also has 100 million poor, many of whom survive on less than 20 US dollars a year, the China Youth Daily said Tuesday, reports AFP.

Average income in 1992 for inhabitants of the small town of Qibalong in the arid mountainous western area of the autonomous region of Guangxi, was 164 yuan (19 US dollars), said the paper.

Fewer than 10 per cent of families in the town had more than 34 dollars to live on, said the paper which described the southern town as "one of the poorest places on earth."

About 2,000 people out of a population of 16,700 have been forced to seek work in towns further south to avoid starvation.

A few days ago regional officials decided to move 200,000 people from Guangxi who live in a state of poverty similar to

that of Qibalong, said the report.

China has between 80 and 120 million needy people, according to the latest official and World Bank statistics.

About 25 million peasants live on the threshold of poverty which is set at 23 US dollars a year and the official press has published a series of articles recently warning that some regions were becoming poorer due to a lack of solidarity between provinces.

Since, China's economy began to surge ahead in 1992, the gap between rich coastal provinces and the poorer interior regions has become wider.

The gap between town and country is also widening.

Citizens have seen their incomes rise by around 10 per cent in 1993 while those of peasants have risen by only two per cent. Millions of country dwellers saw their standard of living fall in the past year.

Dhaka Stock Prices

At the close of trading on February 16, 1994

Index falls by 3 points

Star Report

against Taka 489.15 of Tuesday.

The Bangladesh Oxygen (1337) also experienced remarkable gain.

Trading at a glance

DSSE All Share Price Index	528.60413
Market Capitalisation Tk	24047725495.50
Turnover in Volume Tk	30195.75
Turnover in Value	4475622.00
Company's Change Number	(per share) of shares traded

Losers (25)

AB Bank	15.00	5
Afslab Automobiles	3.79	280
Eastern Cables	0.33	330
Singer BD	132.36	36
Atlas BD	1.18	1900
BD Autocars	0.12	110
Renwick Jaineswar	3.00	80
National Fibres	1.00	20
Bengal Food	3.73	104
Dhaka Vegetable	3.50	20
Rupon Oil	0.62	2500
Cig Vegetable	1.25	60
Sailam Textile	1.50	40
Eagle Star Textile	0.31	1050
Rahman Chemicals	6.08	20
Wata Chemical	4.00	80
Beximco Infusions	43.40	250
Apex Tannery	10.00	190
Monno Ceramic	10.00	75
Usmania Glass	1.00	125
Sava Refractories	2.00	10
Beximco Ltd	2.24	6000
Cig Cement	2.26	1160
BCIL (Deb)	21.46	2

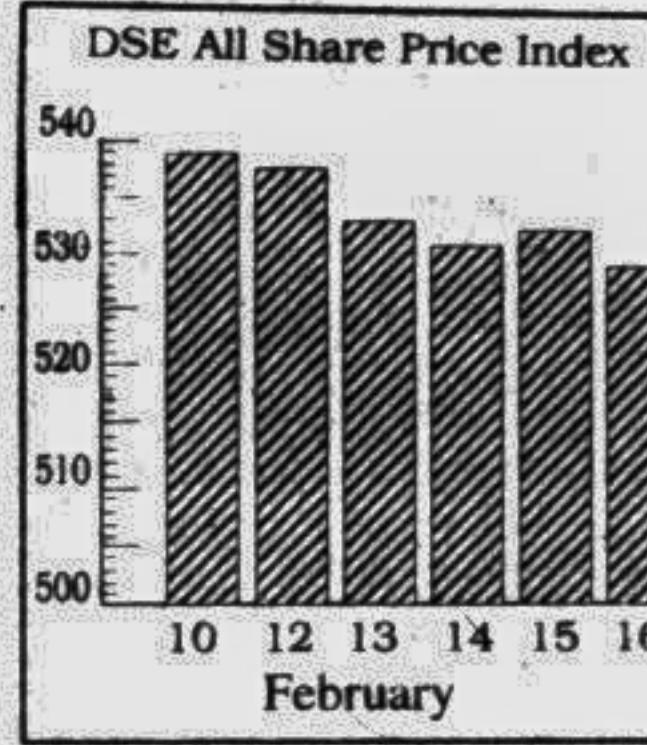
Gainers (11)

IFC	0.13	75
5th ICB M Fund	1.92	240
6th ICB M Fund	0.52	800
Quasem Drycells	0.30	200
B Thai Aluminium	0.52	380
BD Oxygen	0.99	1337
Taluk Spinning	2.00	20
Tamijuddin Textile	1.00	10
Ibnsina	0.67	10
GQ Ball Pen	2.61	485
Apex Footwear	1.08	2120

Issues (10) unchanged

IDLC (300)	4th ICB M
20th Howlader PVC (40)	Zeal Bangle Sugar
70th Desh Garments (30)	Ambee Pharma (100)
30th Bata Shoe (3440)	BGIC (900)
15th United Insurance (150)	Beximco Pharma Deb (1)

DSE All Share Price Index



Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port

Berth position and performance of vessels as on 16.2.94

Berth No Name of Vessels Cargo Last Port Call Local Agent Date of Arrival Leaving

Berth No	Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port Call	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Leaving
JAI	Morning Star	M Seed (P)	Vank	CCNL	13/2	22/2
J/2	Moskovskiy	Cement	Tutti	ANCL	7/2	16/2
J/3	Komsomolets					
J/4	Calatagan	D Peas	Cal	Litmond	9/2	16/2
J/5	Marine Three	Cement	Tutti	AML	21/1	16/2
J/6	Danyang	Cement	Rish	OTL	10/2	18/2
J/7	Gold Finch	Mop (P)	Ukra	MSA	4/2	20/2
J/8	Hang Cheong	Cement	Sing	PSAL	6/2	20/2
J/9	Al Reza	Wheat (G)	K Dia	BSL	15/2	20/2
J/10	Hang Wagn	Cement	S Hal	BDShip	31/1	18/2
J/11	Dolores	Idle		Seacom	R/A	28/2
J/12	Pu Aspiration	Cement	Sing	PSAL	3/2	16/2
J/13	Own Chong					
J/14	Nyon Ho	Cement	Sing	Litmond	3/2	20/2
J/15	lokasti	Cement	Tutti	Litmond	1/2	21/2
MPB/1	Ingenuity	Cont	Col	BTSA	14/2	16/2
MPB/2	I Yamburenko	Cont	Sing	CT	15/2	18/2
CGJ	Arcadia	C Clinic	Viza	CSL	10/2	21/2
GSJ	Al Tabith	Wheat (G)	K Dia	BSL	R/A	17/2
RM/4	Ronjai Victory	Cement	Viza	USTC	7/1	22/2
DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	C Oil	HSC	R/A	16/2	
DDJ/2	Banglar Asha	Repair	HSC	R/A	17/2	

Vessels Due at Outer Anchorage

Name of Vessels	Date of Arrival	Last Port Call	Local Agent	Cargo	Leaving

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