

ALL INDIA INSURANCE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

LIC BUILDING SECRETARIAT ROAD HYDERABAD 500063

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To all the Zonal/Divisional/State/Regional Units:

Dear Comrades,

Centenary of the International Women's Day

In the year 1910, the first Socialist International Women's Conference was held in Copenhagen, where a proposal was placed by the German Socialist leader, Clara Zetkins for observation of an International Women's Day. This proposal was concretised in the form of a decision and across Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and Austria the day was observed on 19th March 1911. More than ten lakh women and men participated in the rallies strongly voicing the women's right to work, to vote, to hold public office and to end discrimination. Hence, this year's International Women's Day marks the 100 years of its observance on the 8th March 2011.

The entire working class across the globe is celebrating the **completion of centenary year of International Women's day** on 8th March, 2011.

AIEA knows that women's equality is a matter of concern for the whole society. It is a democratic task. Secondly, women's participation in the production helps the growth of the whole economy. A UN study observed that even a growth in female secondary schooling results in the growth of the economy but still girls are often kept away from receiving education. Com. Kannammal of Tanjavore division (and one of the conveners of South Zone Working Women Coordination committee) devoted her time to empowerment of women during the campaign for "cycle for the women". The slogan "O sister come learn cycling, move with the wheel of time" caught the imagination of thousands of women in the Pudukkottai District of Tamil Nadu.

As a conscious trade union, AIEA took up the initiative for mobilising the working women of the insurance industry from 1988 onwards. Today because of these efforts, women comrades have come forward to work as the General Secretary/President at the Divisional/State/Regional levels like in Chennai Region, Delhi State, Bangalore Division I, Ernakulam Division and other centres. There are women comrades who are discharging their duties as office-bearers of Zonal Association. One comrade of Bareilly is the Editor of the Zonal monthly magazine of North Central Zonal Association. An active comrade under Raipur division is discharging her responsibility of the District General Secretary of CITU in a remote district of Chattisgarh called Dhamtari. There are hundreds of women comrades who have taken up responsibility of leadership at the branch level across the country. What is more is that in all the struggles chalked out by the AIEA, the participation of the Women employees across the country is phenomenal.

AIEA conveys its revolutionary greetings to all the working women in insurance who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the other comrades in organising the working class across the country.

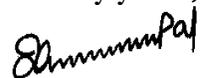
The neo-liberal policies have heaped difficulties on the workers across the globe. The impact of these policies is more on the women. In Europe, during the recent financial crisis, the jobs lost by women were 66.6% of the total job losses. In respect of wages paid 78% women are subjected to discrimination across the world. In our country also, the situation is no different. Only 11% urban women have access to employment. The enactment of 33% women reservation bill is getting delayed due to lack of political will on the part of the major political parties of this country except left. In respect of IT exemption limits, the higher exemption limit which was available to working women till last year has been denied this time.

Hence the directions of the government policies are clear. The policies which negate the interest of the working class as a whole would not be friendly towards one section of the working class. Hence the trade union movement has to take up the issues relating to the women as a part of their fight against the anti worker and anti people policies of the government.

We are very happy that our Divisional Units have planned many programmes for the observance of the International Women's Day in the form of Conventions, Seminars, assistance to deprived sections and such other programmes. **We welcome these independent initiatives** taken by our women comrades and call upon all the members to participate in the programmes in a massive way.

Long Live International Women's Day!

Comradely yours,



General Secretary.