

**ALL INDIA INSURANCE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION**  
**LIC BUILDING SECRETARIAT ROAD HYDERABAD 500 063**  
**(E-mail: [aiieahyd@gmail.com](mailto:aiieahyd@gmail.com))**

Cir.No.22 / 2019

29<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

To  
All the Zonal/Divisional/State/Regional Units

Dear Comrades,

All India Insurance Employees' Association greets all the employees on its Sixty Ninth formation Day – the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2019. Memorising this occasion Com. Amanulla Khan, President, AIIEA has capsuled its journey for last sixty eight years in his article written in Insurance Worker July 2019 issue, which is reproduced hereunder.

Let us together further strengthen and cement the unity of the organisation. Long live AIIEA.

With Revolutionary greetings,

Comradely yours,



General Secretary.

---

Time the journey began, we remained focussed on destination  
Eyes have never seen crossing of many a milestone

These two beautiful lines of Bashir Badr correctly describe the sixty eight year glorious journey of AIIEA. The AIIEA took birth in 1951 not only to free the insurance employees from the then prevailing gruelling and exploitative working conditions and enhance their living standards but also to contribute to the ideals of construction of a just equal and fair society. The AIIEA remained steadfast to these lofty and noble ideals of the working class in its inspiring journey of the last sixty eight years. The AIIEA did not rest or pause after achieving great victories and the journey continued traversing through tortuous paths. The uncompromising struggles to advance the interests of the insurance employees while remaining committed to the ideals of the working class has made AIIEA a unique trade union commanding respect and admiration of the national and international trade unions movements.

The year which has just gone into history has been very rewarding for insurance employees. In this year AIIEA took another gigantic step towards further enhancing the life and living standards of the insurance employees. The decade long demand

and struggles for a final pension option to those who failed to exercise their options in 1995 and 1997 to the LIC and GIC Employees' Pension Schemes 1995 was finally secured. This was no easy task. It required pushing back policy of the government not to reopen the defined benefit pension scheme for various sections of the employees in different sectors of the government. This trend is seen across the world where capitalism is struggling to come out of crisis since the global financial meltdown. The Governments are of the view that defined benefit pension schemes are not sustainable due to increase in life span, reducing interest rates and the resultant hike in the annuity prices. It is clear that a final pension option has been secured in the most hostile political and economic environment. This great achievement once again vindicates the faith of AIIEA in struggles and need to be celebrated. In the last one year, the AIIEA could also secure many monetary benefits for the insurance employees enhancing their quality of life.

The AIIEA did not confine itself to the economic demands within the industry. It also carried out a relentless campaign to mobilise broader sections of the people on issues relating to people and the economy. The units of AIIEA across the country conducted number of seminars and conventions on issues like unemployment, agricultural distress and the need to protect and promote constitutional values. These tasks were taken to mobilise the people on pressing issues of the nation and make the political class respond and find solutions to improve the quality of life in India. In this year, the AIIEA true to its tradition also reached out with support to those impacted by natural disasters in different parts of the country.

The AIIEA took upon these campaigns with a clear understanding that the economic path chosen after independence favoured the capitalists and landlord classes. However, the Indian ruling classes embracing neoliberal economic policies in 1991 further aggravated the hardships of the common people. Under neo-liberalism, the State gave up all pretensions of acting as a distributor of social and economic justice and unabashedly promoted the interests of both Indian and foreign capital. The neoliberal policies promoted privatisation of state undertakings, undermining of subsidies to the poor, tax concession to the industry and attack on the permanency of jobs. In the last quarter century the economic gap between the rich and poor has astonishingly widened. The government has placed great importance on the growth of GDP and less attention is paid to enhance the quality of life of all citizens. This understanding is based on the assumption that when growth takes place there will be trickle down and a rising tide will lift all the boats. But it is also a fact that general standards of life do not improve automatically with the growth in the GDP unless State intervenes on behalf of the poor and the working class. Promoting the corporate driven economy also requires the State to control the society in order to prevent the outburst of anger against the economic and social injustices. Polarisation and division is the weapon of the ruling class to meet this goal.

The AIIEA like many other progressive organisations had hoped that the political parties would debate these issues during the General Elections of 2019 and present

their understanding to help the electorate make an informed decision. Unfortunately, the bread and butter issues became non-issues and the election campaign was on the basis of polarisation, fear and hate. The corporate houses and the media owned by them were accomplices in diverting the attention from the life and living issues of the people. It is an indisputable fact that the big media worked as a propaganda machine of the government.

The Prime Minister after a resounding win has said that the election results have demolished the myth of secularism and class division. He pointed out that Secularism has become irrelevant and India has only two types of people, those who want poverty to end and those making efforts to end the poverty. This understanding is totally flawed and a misread of the Indian Constitution. This understanding also ignores the reality of the existence of caste oppression and class exploitation. The AIIEA is clear that this is not an innocent assertion of the Prime Minister. The Indian ruling classes want to not just keep alive these caste differences but have a clear strategy to promote them in order to weaken the class struggle. That the Indian ruling classes have succeeded in creating divisions among the exploited sections show the weakness of the movements against caste oppression and class exploitation. The co-option of some caste organisations by the ruling classes is undoubtedly a betrayal of Dr. Ambedkar who tirelessly worked for annihilation of the castes.

The AIIEA is often accused for being political. The AIIEA firmly believes that a trade union necessarily has to be political. A trade union is a class organisation. This class organisation unites people irrespective of religion, caste, language and region. This naturally means secularism is foundational to a trade union and class struggle is its soul. The AIIEA knows that it has members attracted to different shades of party politics. Knowing this it consciously works to unite all these differing opinions into common economic struggles by raising economic consciousness firmly believing that this would ultimately lead to class consciousness. The insurance employees have placed unflinching faith and loyalty in AIIEA because they know that AIIEA has always remained loyal to the interests of the employees while making strenuous efforts to make the employees see the need for class politics. This is different from some other trade unions who adopt different stands with different governments as they display a greater loyalty to the political party rather than to the cause of the working class.

History bears testimony to the fact that AIIEA never compromised on the interests of the insurance employees and waged relentless struggles to improve their living standards irrespective of whichever government in power. The AIIEA had conflicts with Nehru Government. It fought severe battles with Indira Gandhi Government on the issues of wage freeze, lock out and against Emergency. The AIIEA fought a bitter battle with Morarji Desai Government on the issue of termination of 1974 wage settlement and attack on Bonus. It again waged a legendary battle against Indira Gandhi government's decision to destroy the monolithic character of LIC and split it

into five or more independent corporations. It took up cudgels against Devegowda Government on the issue of Pension Reforms Bill and Narasimha Rao and Vajpayee Governments against opening up of insurance sector. It prevented UPA I and UPA II in passing the Insurance Laws Amendment Bill which was later passed by the Modi Government. It is again to the credit of the AIEA that it successfully defeated the policy of keeping the basic pay low in the 2012 wage revision by the Modi Government in order to reduce burden on post retiral payments in the form of pension. It must be remembered that the struggle of AIEA against privatisation remains unparalleled in the annals of the history of working class movement anywhere in the world. In short, the glorious history of AIEA is the sum total of the advancements made by insurance employees overcoming often what appeared as insurmountable challenges.

These uncompromising struggles and astonishing successes have endeared AIEA to the insurance employees. This is the reason why successive attempts to split the AIEA based on political opportunism have failed. The employees stood firmly with the AIEA and thwarted all attempts to weaken it. It is a fact that the kind of loyalty and allegiance AIEA commands no other trade union enjoys in any single industry in India. Despite this, the governments and the administrations in LIC continue to deny recognition to AIEA in violation of industrial democracy. Undeterred, AIEA with the support and loyalty of overwhelming majority of the employees in insurance industry continues to make progress and its unstoppable march forward continues in uniting employees across the country and fighting battles against injustices of any kind.

As the AIEA steps into its Sixty-Ninth Year, manifold challenges confront the organisation. The biggest challenge is to continue to preserve and expand unity on the basis of class understanding and class politics. At a time when the country is witnessing unprecedented polarisation on religious and caste lines, it is important to achieve this task. The job security is bound to come under attack from the neoliberal policies and technological advancement including artificial intelligence. The trade union rights can remain safe only when democratic rights remain safe for the people. Today when the progressive character of Indian Constitution is under attack, it becomes the responsibility of all those who believe in communal harmony, universal brotherhood, Justice, compassion and love to unite and fight the forces that attack the Constitution. It has also become necessary to develop cadres not only to propagate the lofty ideals of AIEA within the industry but also in the Indian society. AIEA believes that India is not just a geographical entity; it is a beautiful mosaic of unity in diversity. India is proud of its rich diversities and cultural, religious and linguistic pluralities. Recognition and respecting these diversities and pluralities has kept India united. The present times demand the defence of these diversities as any attempt to homogenise the Indian society would be counter-productive and disastrous for national unity.

These are enormous challenges. But AIEA has never hesitated to accept the challenges howsoever big they are. History of AIEA has many instances of

successes on issues which many others considered impossible to achieve. As the AIIEA steps into the Sixty-Ninth Year of its Journey, let us re-dedicate ourselves to the lofty and noble ideals of AIIEA and continue our march totally focussed on the ultimate destination of constructing an equal, just and fair society.

-----000-----