

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

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To,

All the Zonal/Divisional/State/Regional Units

Dear Comrades,

CENTRAL TRADE UNIONS CALL FOR NATIONWIDE PROTEST ON 3RD JULY

Ten Central Trade Unions including the CITU have given a call for Nationwide Protest on 3rd July 2020. This call has been given against the ruinous economic policies of the government, especially the proposal for wholesale privatization of public sector undertakings, opening a range of economic activities to the full blast of foreign capital and severe attack on labour laws.

The worst fears on economy have come true. The fourth quarter of the financial year 2019-20 recorded a growth of 3.1% pulling down the entire year's growth to 4.2%. This is the worst performance in the last 11 years. This decline was seen coming with downward slide in industrial production, low private consumption and practically no new investments. It is clear that economy is yet to come out of the self inflicted injuries of demonetisation and an ill-planned GST regime. The impact of lockdown and Covid 19 would have had marginal impact as it affected only around last 10 days of the financial year. The full impact of the lockdown is bound to be felt in the current financial year and many more years to follow. There are different projections on economy for current year by different rating and international agencies. But there is a total consensus that the Indian economy will shrink very badly.

The worst impact of this crisis will fall on the workers and the marginalised sections. It is estimated that more than 120 million workers lost jobs as a result of the lockdown. The plight of the migrant workers is too painful for words to capture. The insensitivity of the State to the sufferings of these workers was baffling. Nowhere in the world, tens of thousands of young, old, women and children were seen walking bare foot, hungry, tired and exhausted on roads to reach their villages. Those who were forced to remain confined to the cities were denied dignity.

This situation demanded a serious intervention from the government to help the most impacted sections of the population and some help to the small and medium enterprises which employ overwhelming numbers of workers. The trade unions demanded that the State must help the vulnerable during this grave crisis. They suggested a direct cash transfer of Rs.7500 per month for next six months to all non-income tax paying households including unorganised labour registered or unregistered. The Unions also demanded free ration to all working people for six months, strengthening of the MGNREG Scheme and supporting the small and medium business units. The Unions also demanded that the government should

ensure that no worker is retrenched, laid off or fired. These were reasonable and just demands in the face of a grave crisis.

Rather than heeding to the justified and reasonable demands of the trade union movement, the government is using the present crisis to push forward its neoliberal agenda when events have clearly proved that neo-liberalism is a failed project. There is a massive attack on the rights of the workers and labour laws are so changed to condemn the workers to slavery of capital. The government has also laid down the agenda for privatising all the public sector enterprises and opening the economy to full blast of both the domestic and foreign capital. Important sectors of the economy like financial sector, ports, mines, space, defence etc. are being opened fully for the exploitation of the private capital. The government which speaks of Atmanirbhar Bharat has become critically dependent on foreign capital. Growth has been made a hostage to foreign capital.

The push towards privatisation will have a devastating effect on the insurance industry. The government has already taken measures to privatise public sector general insurance industry by divesting its shareholding in GIC-Re and New India. The consolidation of the three remaining companies in general insurance and their being taken to the capital markets is at an advance stage of preparation. The Government has decided to list LIC to raise the much needed resources to fund the fiscal deficit. The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) under the Finance Ministry is reported to have issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) regarding engagement of pre-Transaction Advisors for assisting DIPAM in the processes related to the IPO of LIC. Therefore, there is a need to understand the disastrous consequences of these economic policies and make determined efforts to defeat them.

Struggles today are developing in every sector. The restrictions placed to stop the spread of coronavirus and the lockdown conditions have not deterred the workers from waging struggles through innovative methods. The Electricity Workers have decided to launch serious struggles. The workers in the Coal industry have decided on a three-day strike to protest against privatising of coal mines. There are reports of brave struggles by the Asha and Anganwadi workers. The doctors are protesting. Lawyers are agitating. **In this background, the Central trade unions including CITU have given a call to observe 3rd July 2020 as Nationwide Protest Day against the disastrous policies of the government.**

We extend solidarity and support to this call of the Central trade unions and feel that this situation provides an opportunity for bringing together all the sectoral struggles to build a gigantic common struggle. **We call upon insurance employees throughout the country to observe the Nationwide Protest Day through a programme of Badge Wearing (the Text of the Badge will be communicated to the Units) and any other programme that the units may deem fit keeping physical distancing norms in view.**

With Greetings,

Comradely Yours



General Secretary